MAY 29, 2017
$6.00

THE JESUIT REVIEW OF FAITH AND CULTURE

James Martin on Ministry to L.G.B.T. Catholics p18

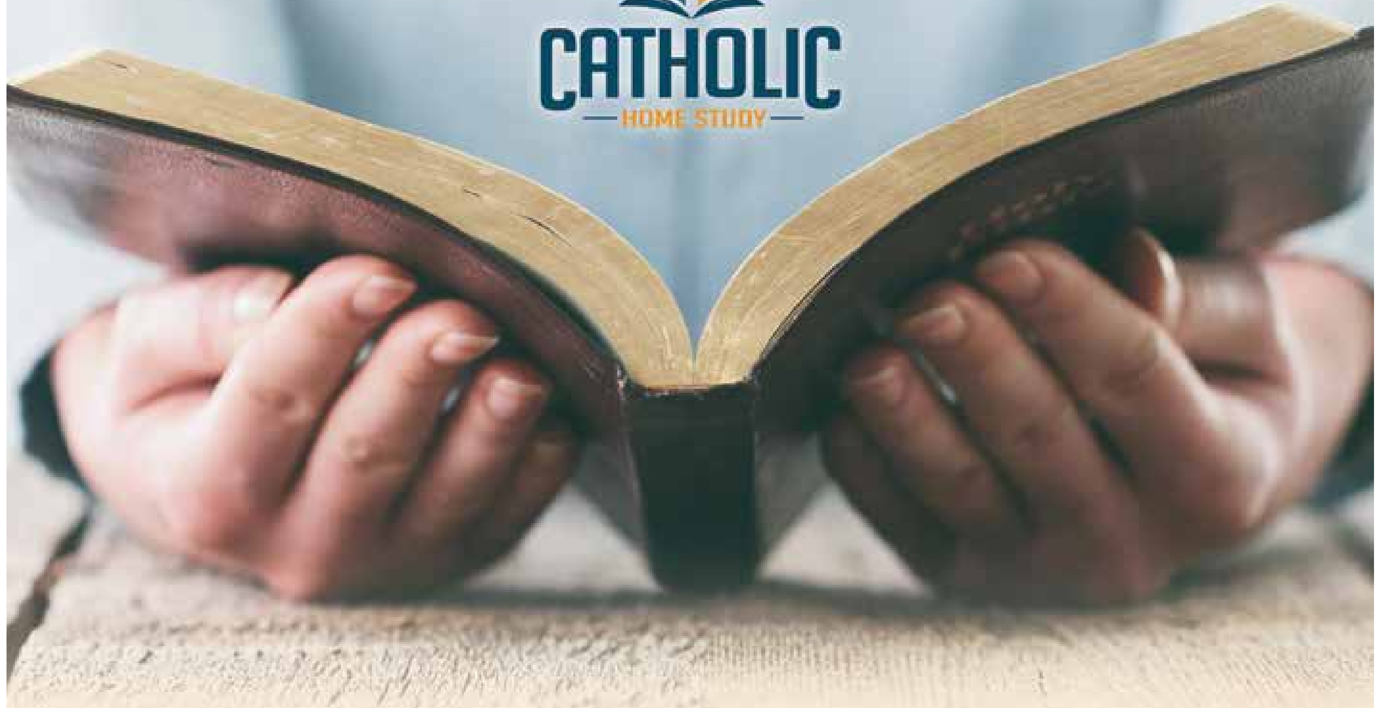
The (Complicated) American Dream of Junot Díaz p42

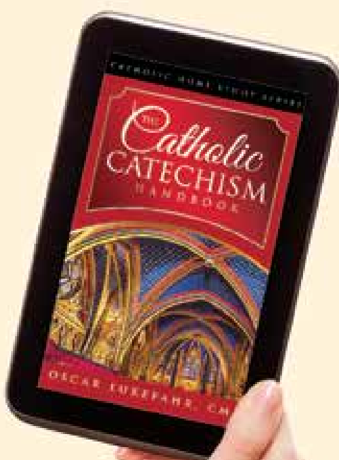
God-Talk at Mr. Jefferson's University

Nichole M. Flores p28

Growing Up With Dorothy Day p36

Informed. Inspired. Enriched.





Since 1941, millions of people around the world have benefited by Catholic Home Study's free faith education courses.

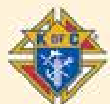
Now, it's your turn to deepen your understanding of Jesus Christ and the Roman Catholic Church.

Take part in this free study from the comfort of your own home, at your own pace. Nine lively, engaging books explain basic Catholic teachings and beliefs; the Mass; prayer; Mary, the mother of Jesus; the Bible; and much more. The series is perfect for individuals or groups—including cradle, lukewarm, faithful, fallen away, and non-Catholics alike.

catholichomestudy.org

No computer? Call us at (573) 547-4084.

A shared ministry of Vincentian Priests and Brothers and the Missouri Knights of Columbus



AMR

All the Way With J.F.K.

Sixty years ago this summer, in the wake of mounting political violence in French Algeria, the gentleman from Massachusetts, John F. Kennedy, took to the floor of the U.S. Senate to deliver his first major foreign policy speech. He concluded it with a bombshell. The United States should exert its influence in NATO, he said, to pressure France into granting independence to its North African possession. "The most powerful single force in the world today," he said, "is neither Communism nor capitalism... but man's eternal desire to be free and independent. The great enemy of that tremendous force of freedom is called, for want of a more precise term, imperialism."

The speech landed Kennedy on the front page of The New York Times and in hot water with the pro-French foreign policy establishment. President Eisenhower pointedly asked Kennedy to pipe down, saying that if he continued to "shout about such things," Kennedy would undermine U.S. "neutrality" in the Algerian conflict. Dean Acheson, Kennedy's fellow Democrat and a former secretary of state, said that Kennedy's approach was no way to treat America's oldest ally. Kennedy, according to Acheson, was also naïve: Didn't the young man from Massachusetts (whom Acheson once privately called an "uncouth Irishman unfit for high public office") know that French withdrawal from Algeria would lead only to further chaos?

Kennedy's counterattack appeared in the pages of this magazine on Oct. 5, 1957. It was a taut, incisive, compelling 2,500-word essay in which Kennedy not only rebutted his critics but revealed the basic elements of his emerging political philosophy. What the United States needed, he said, was a new strategic calculus based on principled realism rather than the shopworn worldview of his elders.

The audacious junior senator pulled no punches. In response to Ike's claim that he had compromised American neutrality, Kennedy argued that in the realm of practical politics, when our values were at stake, there was no such thing as neutrality: "Our neutrality, we like to believe, signifies a benign attitude, but its surface appearance of tidy order and antisepsis in reality masks an attitude with consequences quite as positive as direct action itself." To those who said that he had undermined the Western alliance, he said: "This is an extraordinarily quaint and archaic view of an alliance whose very conception was based on the hope that problems could be shared." He then likened those who said that the United States should stay out of the conflict to "the chorus in the Greek tragedies," mere passive observers whose fatalism was dangerously out of step.

Kennedy's most powerful counterpunch landed on those who had argued that Algerian independence would create an opening for Communist incursion. Actually, he replied, the opposite was true: "The longer legitimate Algerian aspirations are suppressed, the greater becomes the danger of a reactionary or Communist takeover.... Moreover, such an impasse as that in Algeria makes it very difficult for the United States and its allies to mobilize opinion in the uncommitted world against the greater imperialist outrages of the Soviet Union."

This last argument, that the United States needed to champion the freedom of the emerging post-colonial states, would reappear four years later in his inaugural address (see page 40 in this issue): "To those new states whom we welcome to the ranks of the free, we pledge our word that one form of colonial control shall not have passed away merely to be replaced by a far more iron tyranny." The "iron tyranny" Kennedy had in mind was not just a Communist takeover of the developing world, but the inflexible dogmas that still dominated the Western imagination. In Kennedy's judgment, ideological dogmatism, convenient half-truths and lack of imagination were greater threats to the body politic than the connivance of Communists. "The great enemy of the truth," he later said, "is very often not the lie, deliberate, contrived and dishonest; but the myth, persistent, persuasive and unrealistic."

May 29 marks the one hundredth birthday of President Kennedy. As we continue to reel from Washington's partisan, ideological warfare, it's worth remembering this month not just Kennedy's eloquence, or foibles, or untimely death, but the principled realism and historical imagination he brought to our politics—qualities that he saw in a favorite story about Hubert Lyautey, the French Army general who had served in North Africa. Lyautey once suggested to his gardener that he plant a tree. The gardener told him that this particular tree would not flower for a hundred years. "In that case," Lyautey said, "plant it this afternoon."

Matt Malone, S.J., ***editor in chief; Twitter: @americaeditor.***

THE ISSUE

GIVE AND TAKE

6
YOUR TAKE
Faith communities and mental illness.

8
OUR TAKE
After Comey, keeping a sense of balance; litmus tests lead to mediocre politics.
The Editors

10
SHORT TAKE
The church must build "spiritual ramps" for sex abuse survivors.
Lea Karen Kivi

DISPATCHES

12
L.G.B.T. CATHOLICS
U.S. church wrestles with changing atttitudes attitudes, pastoral practice.

15
In South Africa, President Zuma tries to survive a swirl of scandals.

16
China revives drive to report spies.

17
Church leaders urge fixes to health care bill.

FEATURES

18
THE CHURCH AND THE L.G.B.T. PERSON
Building a ministry of respect, compassion and sensitivity.
James Martin

28
IN JEFFERSON'S SHADOW
Confessions of a Catholic theologian at a public university.
Nichole M. Flores

A group of Chibok girls with President Muhammadu Buhari in Abuja, Nigeria, on May 7. The girls were held captive for three years by Boko Haram militants.
(CNS photo/Bayo Omoboriowo via Reuters. Cover photo: iStockphoto.com/photohoo)

FAITH IN FOCUS

36
UNDER THE GAZE OF DOROTHY DAY
The burden and blessing of my grandmother's faith.
Kate Hennessy

VANTAGE POINT

40
AN INAUGURAL ACCOLADE
Feb. 4, 1961.

IDEAS IN REVIEW

42
EL SUEÑO AMERICANO DE JUNOT DÍAZ
The author of *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* talks immigration, politics and Dominican identity.

BOOKS
The Blood of Emmett Till; Yitzhak Rabin; Meeting God in the Upper Room; Killing Others.

CULTURE
"Bill Nye Saves the World";
"13 Reasons Why."

POEM
Astereognosis. Amit Majmudar

THE WORD

54
God calls us to transform the earth.

All creation extends from the Trinity.
Michael R. Simone

LAST TAKE

58
LEON E. PANETTA
Why President Trump's budget is a threat to our national security.

Did you receive support from your faith community while you were experiencing depression and/or anxiety?

America posed the above question in an attempt to get a sense of how mental distress can both affect and be affected by faith communities. Denise Drew Gallope wrote in response on our Facebook page: "A faith community can give support. But depression and anxiety, like other medical conditions, need to be addressed by a trained clinical psychologist or psychiatrist." Many readers echoed this point in their answers, emphasizing that while support from a faith community can be valuable, it is in no way a substitute for professional help.

A narrow majority of our reader sample (56 percent) told **America** that they had not received support from their parishes for their depression or anxiety. A few readers noted that they had not sought out or, in rarer cases, even wanted this support from their faith communities. A more considerable proportion of readers underscored the difficulty of seeking this help during periods of mental distress and called for better outreach by parishes.

A significant obstacle for Catholics with depression and/or anxiety was the dangerous—and wrongful—interpretation of these conditions as spiritual failures. "It took me longer to recognize my depression as an actual mental illness, since I kept spiritualizing it," one reader told **America**. "There should be more training for priests to recognize the distinction between sadness and depression. A gentle nudge in the confessional to explore counseling would have been helpful." Another contingent described feeling rejected by their communities in their time of need, after they asked for support and did not receive it. From Massachusetts, Theresa recounted a painful interaction in her parish in which she was told "anxiety and depression indicated a lack of faith in God."

Forty-four percent of our reader sample told us that they had received support in their parishes while experiencing anxiety or depression and described the ways this had helped them alongside professional treatments. Thomas, of Michigan, expressed gratitude for the help he received from his parish while he was receiving professional help. "One of the first people I told about my first suicide attempt was my priest.... He encouraged me to keep up with therapy and medication and to fight for my will to live, even when I wanted to give up. Other members of the community were wonderful as well, holding my hands in prayer, being there to talk or just telling me that they're glad I'm here."

YES: 44%

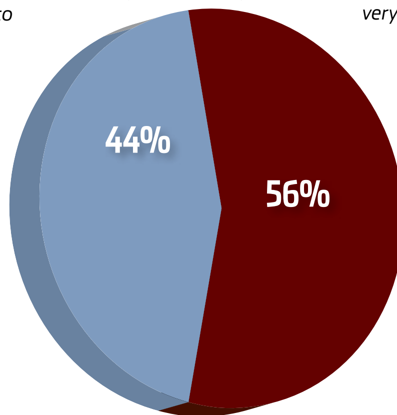
"I have gotten very good support over the last 20 years from a friend who is a priest. I wouldn't be alive if it wasn't for him. I think it was God who let me know it was okay to open up to him."
Barbara, Oswego, Ill.

"I found almost all of the priests I encountered to have at least a basic knowledge of anxiety disorders, and I was encouraged by several priests to consider medication and counseling for the anxiety."
Geoffrey, Crystal Lake, Ill.

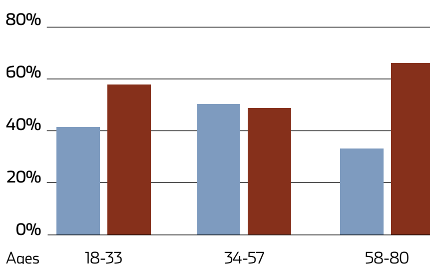
NO: 56%

"Depression made it really difficult for me to get motivated to go to Mass. That was the first sign for me that something was very wrong. I didn't really seek support at my parish. I mostly talked to professionals and close friends."
Carly, St. Louis, Mo.

"During a bad episode I was working as a part-time minister at a church. I got pushback when I raised the prospect of leaving the position.... The needs of the community were placed over my own. Many people suffer for a long time before their condition has a name, and it was really hard to ask for help when I didn't have a name for it."
Jessica, Brick, N.J.



READER RESPONSES BY AGE



Did you receive professional treatment for depression/anxiety?

Yes	90%
No	10%

If you are experiencing mental distress visit mentalhealth.gov for resources on how to get treatment. These results are based on reader responses to a poll promoted on Facebook, Twitter and in our email newsletter.

Paradigmatic Shifts
Re "The Women Who Marched," by Matt Malone, S.J. (Of Many Things, 5/15): This is an excellent commentary. It is proof that paradigmatic shifts in one's beliefs can happen. The accompanying video, "Pro-Life Millennials Speak Out," is also excellent.

Bill Collier
Online Comment

Christlike Honesty
Re "What Can Beyoncé and Pope Francis Teach Us About Love?" by Olga Segura (5/15): I was so happy to see this article because I love both Beyoncé and Pope Francis. I agree when Ms. Segura mentions this is a bit of a stretch, but I believe a large reason why Beyoncé is such a popular artist is her honesty, which is obviously very Christlike.

I would just like to comment on Ms. Segura's last line, which I read as an idea that we shouldn't strive for perfection, and rather accept "real" or natural, post-original sin imperfection. While we shouldn't despair, Christ does tell us to "be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:48). Thank you for finding and sharing goodness from a variety of surprising sources!

Therese Trinko
Online Comment

Unexpected Places
As an older, white, Catholic woman, I will begin by thanking Olga Segura for writing this and **America** for publishing it. What an important piece. If there is any hallmark of the Catholic imagination, in particular the Ignatian Catholic imagination, it would be the ability to see God in the most unexpected places. And in Beyoncé and "Lemonade," there is so much to be seen.

Fran Rossi Szpylczyn
Online Comment

Basic Human Rights
I agree with many points made by Heather Kirn Lanier in "My Daughter Has a Disability. I Don't Want Jesus to Fix Her" (5/15). The writer's unconditional love for her daughter just as she is is a great inspiration; and her delight in her daughter's love for her is precious. I feel strongly that we must join in solidarity with folks with disabilities in their bold struggles for the full recognition (in law and in practice) of their basic human rights. And we must cherish them and be friends and loving relatives to them as we would to all people and receive love from them—as in all good human relationships.

Joseph E. Mulligan, S.J.
Nicaragua

Individualistic Society
Thank you to Kerry Weber for her article on postpartum depression ("Healing a Mother's Pain," 5/15). As a doctor, I treat many women for this condition and suffered it myself after the birth of my second child. Caring for infants and toddlers can be brutal and emotionally depleting. Our individualistic society offers little support for new mothers compared with countries where the entire community cares for new parents.

Tracey Hoelzle
Online Comment

Their Own Purposes
Re "A Sorta-Catholic's Very Catholic Wedding," by Tracey Wigfield (5/1): I was delighted at the happy conclusion of Ms. Wigfield's witty and honest report of her journey. Sadly, not all encounters between Sorta-Catholics and the parish end so graciously. Cultural Catholics often have the mistaken notion that the sacrament of matrimony is theirs rather than the church's. It takes a willingness to listen, learn and grow for all the parties involved.

After 40-plus years of priestly ministry, it has become clear to me that not all who approach the church for sacramental celebrations are really seeking what the church has to offer. I'm glad many do use this as a teachable moment, but, unfortunately, many simply use the church and its ministers for their own purposes.

(Rev.) David Norris
Fresno, Calif.

A Compelling Testimony
Re "Confessing My Porn Addiction," by the Rev. John Smith (4/3): I would like to thank the author for his very compelling, sobering testimony regarding a problem many would like to sweep under the carpet. Although he suffered from an addiction to porn (which has many aspects that make it evil), it could have been an addiction to almost anything: tobacco, alcohol, food.

Terre Gaines McLendon
Online Comment

After Comey, Keeping a Sense of Balance

For someone who campaigned on law and order, calling on others to "play by the rules," President Trump has an unsettling habit of violating traditions and norms of behavior. His abrupt firing of the F.B.I. director, James Comey—who learned of his dismissal from reports on television—certainly follows that pattern. Mr. Trump was unaware or unconcerned that his action would be seen as an attempt to shut down the F.B.I.'s investigation into his presidential campaign's possible ties to the government of the Russian leader Vladimir Putin.

At this point, it is important to find level ground, rather than stumble down a hill that we may not be able to climb back up. It is tempting to declare Mr. Comey's dismissal a civil or constitutional crisis, to say, as David Frum does in The Atlantic, that we are now at "the hour of testing" for our democracy. But that may only freeze people on either side of our political divide and make it more difficult for any independent investigation to maintain credibility.

Decoding Mr. Trump's motives for firing Mr. Comey is less important than making sure that the investigation into any Russian attempts to manipulate our electoral system continues with adequate funding, with the authority to gather all important evidence and without pressure from the president or administration obstructing its progress. It is also essential that the investigation be insulated from partisan politics as much as possible; its conclusions will never be accepted by history if they are seen as mere attempts by one political party to score points against the other.

Before embarking on another year of front-page politics, our political leaders should pause and figure out the best way to find the truth rather than the most effective way to vanquish their opposition. A thorough investigation—and voter pressure on members of Congress to support such an investigation—will be a far more effective brake on Mr. Trump's rejection of standard norms for presidential behavior than simple outrage.

Litmus Tests Lead to Mediocre Politics and Voter Disengagement

NARAL Pro-Choice America, which lobbies against restrictions on abortion, was not pleased when a Democratic National Committee official appeared at a campaign rally last month for Heath Mello, the Democratic nominee for mayor of Omaha who has been touted as a rising star in the party. The problem was that the 37-year-old Catholic had supported a Nebraska law requiring doctors to inform women considering an abortion that they could first ask for an ultrasound scan. The uproar over Mr. Mello's mild apostasy caused Tom Perez, the chair of the D.N.C., to say that the pro-choice position "is not negotiable and should not change city by city or state by state." After his campaign became a national story, Mr. Mello lost to the incumbent Republican on May 9, hurt in part by lower voter turnout in the city's more Democratic neighborhoods.

House minority leader Nancy Pelosi wisely pushed back against Mr. Perez's absolutism. "This is not a rubber-stamp party," the California Democrat told The Washington Post on May 2. "I grew up Nancy D'Alesandro, in Baltimore, Maryland; in Little Italy; in a very devout Catholic family," Ms. Pelosi said. "Most of those people—my family, extended family—are not pro-choice. You think I'm kicking them out of the Democratic Party?"

Ms. Pelosi's comments are welcome, but they do not guarantee that candidates who do not toe NARAL's line will receive support from the national party. Abortion is also not the only litmus test applied by the two major parties. Democrats are expected, without exception, to support same-sex marriage. Republicans are compelled to oppose any restriction on gun ownership and to fight tax increases under any circumstance.

As each party demands total obedience to its platform, its pool of potential candidates for public office shrinks. Qualified people with nuanced and complex views on public policy are overlooked; shallow opportunists who excel at parroting party orthodoxy have an advantage. Litmus tests hurt voters in another way. In every even-numbered year, there are hundreds of congressional districts and thousands of state legislative districts in which one of the two major parties essentially gives up, failing to recruit and adequately fund candidates who can appeal to the voters of those districts. The Democrats take a pass on rural districts with pro-life majorities, and the Republicans ignore districts where a majority wants to do something about gun violence. Voters (or

potential voters) see elections that have already been decided for them, and they justifiably become more cynical about the political process.

In 2016 the Democratic Party won a single U.S. Senate seat in the Midwest. Tammy Duckworth, its successful pro-choice candidate, raised 65 percent of her campaign contributions from outside her home state of Illinois, with more than $1 million from the New York and Washington, D.C., areas and $420,000 from the pro-choice PAC Emily's List. In contrast, the unsuccessful Democratic nominee in Louisiana, Foster Campbell (the only U.S. Senate candidate endorsed by Democrats for Life) raised only 42 percent of his contributions from out of state. For both parties, it seems that the formula for success in state and even some municipal elections is to appeal to a small base of donors in a handful of cities who demand 100 percent voting records from groups like Naral and the National Rifle Association. The voters who actually live in a state or legislative district have less and less influence over who represents them. This is a distortion of democracy and yet another reason for voters to become disenchanted with our electoral process.

America | MEDIA
A JESUIT MINISTRY

President and Editor in Chief	Matt Malone, S.J.
Executive Editors	Maurice Timothy Reidy
	Sam Sawyer, S.J.
	Kerry Weber
	Jeremy Zipple, S.J.
Editor at Large	James Martin, S.J.
Production Editor	Robert C. Collins, S.J.
Senior Editors	Kevin Clarke
	Edward W. Schmidt, S.J.
Books Editor	Raymond A. Schroth, S.J.
Poetry Editor	Joseph Hoover, S.J.
Vatican Correspondent	Gerard O'Connell
National Correspondent	Michael O'Loughlin
Associate Editors	José Dueño, S.J.
	Ashley McKinless
	Olga Segura
	Robert David Sullivan
	Eric Sundrup, S.J.
Assistant Editors	Zachary Davis, Joseph McAuley
Producer	Eloise Blondiau
Creative Director	Shawn Tripoli
Art Director	Sonja Kodiak Wilder
Contributing Writers	Elizabeth Bruenig
	Brendan Busse, S.J.
	Nichole M. Flores
	Pascal-Emmanuel Gobry
	Cecilia Gonzalez-Andrieu
	Jim McDermott, S.J.
	Kaya Oakes
	Nathan Schneider
	Stephanie Slade
	Eve Tushnet
Contributing Editors	Ellen Boegel
	Patrick Gilger, S.J.
	Adam Hincks, S.J.
	Leah Libresco
	Maryann Cusimano Love
	Paul McNelis, S.J.
Regional Correspondents	Dean Dettloff (Toronto)
	Anthony Egan, S.J. (Johannesburg)
	Jan-Albert Hootsen (Mexico City)
	Jim McDermott, S.J. (Los Angeles)
	Timothy Padgett (Miami)
	Russell Pollitt, S.J. (Johannesburg)
	David Stewart, S.J. (London)
	Rhona Tarrant (Dublin)
	Judith Valente (Chicago)
	Verna Yu (Hong Kong)
Special Contributors	Jake Martin, S.J., Sean Salai, S.J.
Editor, The Jesuit Post	Daniel Dixon, S.J.
Moderator, Catholic Book Club	Kevin Spinale, S.J.
O'Hare Fellows	Teresa Donnellan
	Nicholas Genovese
	Wyatt Massey
Executive V.P. & C.O.O.	Ted Nadeau
V.P. for Finance and Operations	Rosa M. Del Saz
Director of Advertising Services	Kenneth Arko
Director of Marketing	Louis Cassetta
Director of Special Projects	Chris Keller
Special Assistant to the President and Editor in Chief	Nicholas D. Sawicki
Office Operations Manager	Ryan Richardson
Business Operations Staff	Anastasia Buraminskaya, Glenda Castro
Chairman of the Board	William R. Kunkel

33 West 60th St. 6th Fl.
New York, NY 10023-7905
www.americamagazine.org
facebook.com/americamag
twitter.com/americamag

©2017
America Press Inc. d/b/a
America Media

Advertising ads@americamedia.org 212.515.0126 **Subscriptions and Additional Copies** 1.800.627.9533 **Reprints** reprints@americamedia.org **Editorial Email** america@americamedia.org

The church must build 'spiritual ramps' for abuse survivors

In recent years, the church has made great progress opening its doors to people with disabilities. Most churches now have physical ramps that give people with limited mobility access to the spiritual nourishment of the church.

But what about the Catholic faithful who are inhibited from entering the church, not by a physical disability but a sacramental one? When survivors of sexual abuse by members of the clergy encounter the symbols of Christianity through which they were abused, they may experience feelings ranging from severe discomfort to panic attacks. I consider these "sacramental disabilities." One young girl, for example, was told by the priest who sexually abused her that if she ever told anyone about what he did to her, Jesus would come down from the cross and kill her. One young boy was sexually molested by a priest at the altar. Unless their trauma is addressed, survivors like this young boy and girl might never be able to walk through the doors of the church or participate fully in the sacramental life of the church.

What might be a charitable response to those suffering from a sacramental disability? Wheelchair ramps help disabled persons enter into a church building. There is a need for spiritual ramps to enable Mother Church to go in the other direction: to come down and seek out those who have been sacramentally disabled, knowing that it is extraordinarily difficult for survivors to speak of their abuse to anyone, let alone ask for sacramental modifications.

The sad reality is that victim-blaming is likely to be the response of some parishioners to survivors of clergy abuse. Learning to speak about very sensitive issues in a caring way requires practice. Some parishes have shown leadership in this regard. The Newman Centre at the University of Toronto offered discussions about the movie "Spotlight" to help parishioners and students process their strong reactions to this movie. St. Anthony's Shrine in Boston, has hosted several meetings for persons wishing to share with others how they have been affected by the clergy sexual abuse scandal.

Once a parish community breaks the ice with such an event, offering workshops led by qualified healing professionals specifically on how to respond compassionately to survivors of any form of sexual abuse might minimize the risk of survivors being further traumatized by how members of faith communities respond to them. Similarly, inviting survivors of clergy sexual abuse who wish to assist the church in healing and reconciliation efforts to speak of their experiences provides firsthand knowledge of the sensitivities involved. Identifying caring church members willing to bring the love of Mother Church to survivors of clergy abuse would be a good next step. Once such individuals are identified and trained in communicating with traumatized individuals, perhaps in collaboration with a local sexual assault center and psychologists specializing in healing from trauma, engaging in outreach activities could begin.

Compiling a list of referrals to qualified, competent and survivor-sensitive health professionals, priests, women religious and spiritual directors in a diocese would be very helpful to outreach efforts. Because many survivors of abuse have left their parishes, advertising in local and social media that a parish cares about those wounded in the church, and offers to help them meet their specific needs, is an important work in building a spiritual ramp. Then, a parish might provide a way for a survivor to contact a trained parishioner by telephone or email to be a listening ear, prayer partner, referral provider or supporter who might agree, for example, to meet at the church door and sit with the survivor at Mass.

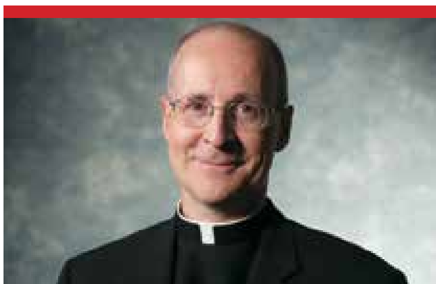
Finally, no matter one's role in church life, prayers for the healing and reconciliation of clergy abuse survivors with the church constitute the most important nails in the construction of any spiritual ramp.

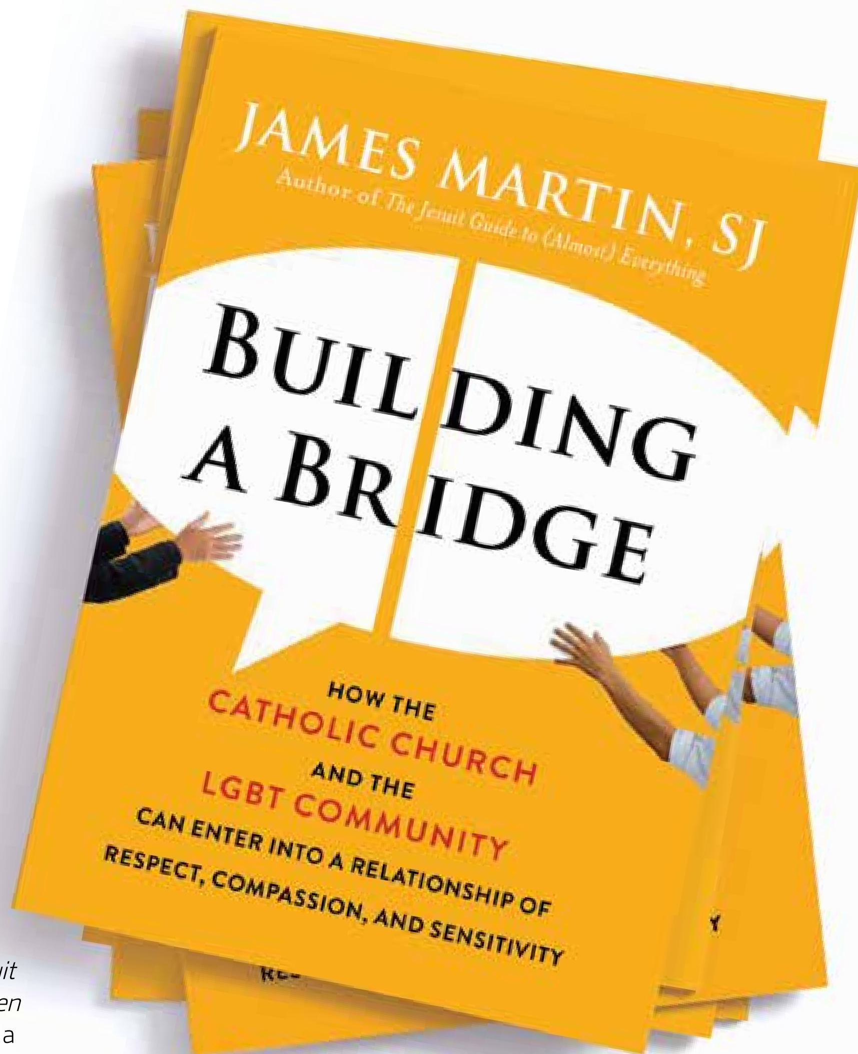
The media reports of abuse in the church may have overwhelmed and tired the faithful to the point of not wanting to hear any more about clergy sexual abuse. But ignoring the cross does not mean that it is not still there. By embracing this cross, the church has an opportunity to grow into its full maturity as Mother Church to a hurting world.

Lea Karen Kivi, *who has experienced clergy misconduct, is the president of Angela's Heart Communications Inc. (www.angelasheart.ca) in Toronto, Canada, and the author of* Abuse in the Church: Healing the Body of Christ.

A welcome and much-needed book.

— CARDINAL KEVIN FARRELL





REV. JAMES MARTIN, SJ,
is a Jesuit priest, editor at large of America magazine, and bestselling author of *Seven Last Words, The Abbey, Jesus: A Pilgrimage, The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything,* and *Between Heaven and Mirth*. In April Pope Francis appointed him as a Consultor to the Secretariat for Communication.

A GROUNDBREAKING BOOK INCLUDES SPIRITUAL RESOURCES FOR THE LGBT COMMUNITY

" A welcome and much-needed book that will help bishops, priests, pastoral associates, and all church leaders more compassionately minister to the LGBT community. It will also help LGBT Catholics feel more at home in what is, after all, their church."
— CARDINAL KEVIN FARRELL,
Prefect of the Vatican's Dicastery for the Laity, Family, and Life

" In too many parts of our church LGBT people have been made to feel unwelcome, excluded, and even shamed. Father Martin's brave, prophetic, and inspiring new book marks an essential step in inviting church leaders to minister with more compassion, and in reminding LGBT Catholics that they are as much a part of our church as any other Catholic."
— CARDINAL JOSEPH TOBIN, Archbishop of Newark

" Father Martin shows how the Rosary and the rainbow flag can peacefully meet one another. A must-read."
—SISTER JEANNINE GRAMICK, SL, cofounder of New Ways Ministry

Available from HarperCollins e-books

Discover great authors, exclusive offers, and more at hc.com.

Front cover design: © HarperCollins
Cover artwork: Akura Yochi | Shutterstock and Business stock
Author photograph: Nutopia

Saffron Edwards, 15, holds up a rainbow-colored umbrella during a student walkout at Dowling Catholic High School in Des Moines, Iowa. Students, alumni and supporters were protesting the school's decision not to hire a gay teacher in April 2015.

U.S. CHURCH WRESTLES WITH CHANGING ATTITUDES, PASTORAL PRACTICE TOWARD L.G.B.T. CATHOLICS

By Michael J. O'Loughlin

Last month, the bishop of Lexington, Ky., addressed hundreds of L.G.B.T. Catholics and their supporters who were meeting in Chicago at a New Ways Ministry national symposium, telling them, "Your presence and your persistence in the church is an inspiration for me and for many."

Bishop John Stowe, O.F.M.Conv., told **America** that he accepted the group's invitation because of a desire to engage in dialogue with Catholics who do not always feel welcome in the church. "Pope Francis talks about a culture of encounter, and that requires a lot of listening," he said. "What I've seen among gay Catholics in my own diocese is a real desire to live their faith and the challenge to do so within a church that is not always accepting or labels them as disordered."

Bishop Stowe is certainly not the first bishop to address a gathering of gay and lesbian Catholics, but his insights are emblematic of recent shifts in the relationship between the church and the L.G.B.T. community. Support for pro-L.G.B.T. causes, including same-sex marriage, has risen sharply among lay Catholics in recent years.

Part of that support, several L.G.B.T. advocates said, stems from the increased visibility of gay and lesbian Americans. More people know a family member or friend who identifies as gay or lesbian and are thus more sympathetic to causes they support.

"Who am I to judge?" is one of the defining phrases of the Francis papacy, a statement praised by some Catholics. The pope has followed up that message of inclusivity with concrete actions as well, meeting with a transgender individual at the Vatican and with a gay couple during his U.S. visit in 2015.

But Brian Brown, head of the National Organization for Marriage, told **America** that those who see in the pope's words and actions a softening of church teaching on marriage or sexuality "fundamentally misinterpret" his beliefs, pointing as evidence to the pope's strong words against gender theory, the idea that male and female identity are not biologically fixed.

He notes polls that show Catholics who attend Mass weekly support same-sex marriage at lower rates than Catholics who attend Mass less frequently, yet he acknowledges that the church must do a better job overall in educating Catholics about church teaching.

"People need to know not only what the church teaches but why it teaches it," he said. "There is a deep, deep well of anthropological, philosophical and theological beauty and truth in church teaching, and I don't think we've done a good enough job in conveying that to the next generation."

American bishops have emphasized different aspects of the church's teaching in their outreach to L.G.B.T. Catholics and their families. Cardinal Joseph Tobin of Newark told an L.G.B.T. Catholic group that they would be "very welcome" to organize a pilgrimage to the cathedral in his city. And Cardinal Blase Cupich of Chicago, a delegate to the pope's global meeting of bishops discussing family issues, said in 2015 that he meets with gay Catholics to understand their perspective and that gay Catholics in relationships could rely on their consciences when it comes to the question of receiving Communion. Meanwhile, Archbishop Charles Chaput of Philadelphia, also a delegate to the Synod of Bishops, has said that gays and lesbians not following church teaching on chastity are not welcome to Communion.

Arthur Fitzmaurice, an Atlanta-based Catholic who through lectures and workshops advocates greater acceptance of L.G.B.T. Catholics in the church, said there have been "a lot of ups and downs" over the past decade. "Catholics in the pews generally accept people in same-sex unions and want the church to be a safe space for them, but there are still pockets in the church in areas where [L.G.B.T.] people feel isolated," he said.

Despite shifting views among average Catholics, advocates for L.G.B.T. people say the church can still feel unwelcoming. Church teaching that homosexual acts are "intrinsically disordered" has not changed, and the Vatican reaffirmed its ban on priests with "deeply-seated homosexual tendencies" as recently as last December. Some also point to policies that prohibit gays and lesbians from holding leadership positions in parishes and to the termi-

AP Photo/The Des Moines Register, Michael Zamora

nation of openly gay and lesbian employees from Catholic schools and other institutions.

Margie Williams was fired from her position as the head of religious education at a Philadelphia-area Catholic school in 2015 after a parent complained about her marriage to a woman. She told **America** that dismissals like hers lead some to drift away from the church, taking with them their creativity, energy and faith.

"We should be about the Gospel," she said. "We should be about including people, which is what Jesus did."

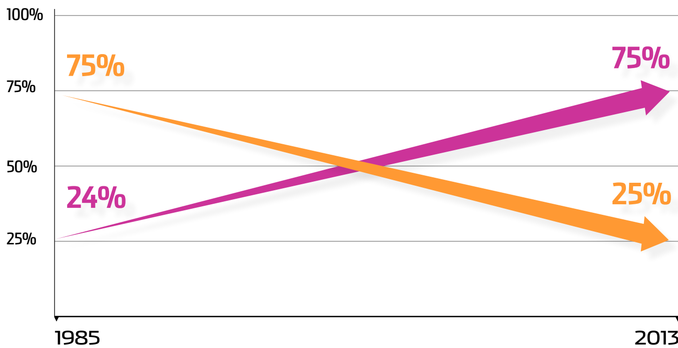
Just three months after she was fired, Ms. Williams and her wife were part of the crowd welcoming Pope Francis to the United States during a ceremony on the White House lawn, an event she described as "an incredible privilege." She continues to be active in her parish and said she has hope that other L.G.B.T. Catholics will also feel welcome in the church.

"With any institution that is as large and has as long a history as the church, any kind of overtures are welcome," she said. "But I also don't expect that the church is going to change overnight. I think Pope Francis and others of his mindset are trying to change the tone and the pastoral approach to L.G.B.T. persons, but it's a long road."

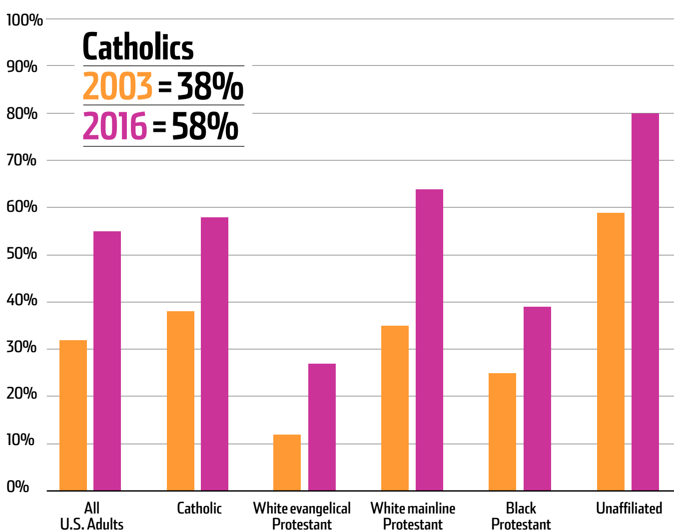
Michael J. O'Loughlin, *national correspondent.*
Twitter: @MikeOLoughlin.

GAY AND LESBIAN VISIBILITY

All U.S. adults: Do you have any friends or relatives or coworkers who have told you, personally, that they are gay or lesbian? YES NO

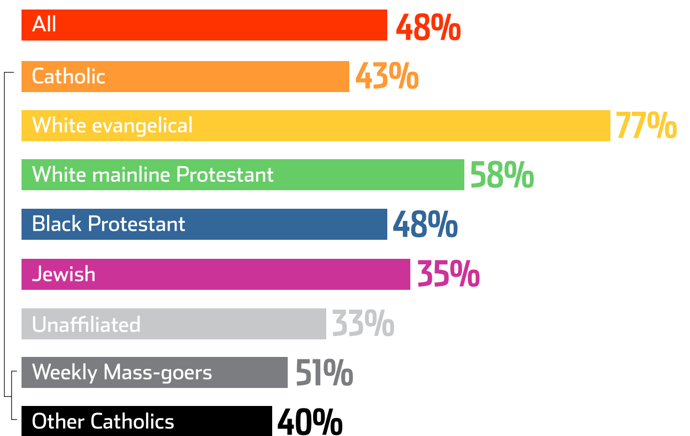


SUPPORT FOR SAME-SEX MARRIAGE 2003 2016

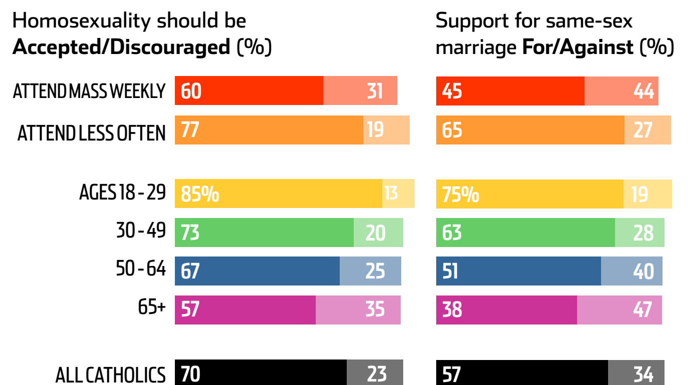


RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION

Percent agreeing "Businesses that provide wedding services should be able to refuse to provide those services to same-sex couples" (2016).



U.S. CATHOLIC VIEWS BY GROUPS (2014)



Sources: "Do you have any friends..." polls from Los Angeles Times (1985) and Gallup (2013), both reported by Gallup; all other polling data from Pew Research Center. Note: a Gallup poll from May 2017 found support for same-sex marriage at 64 percent among all U.S. adults, 65 percent among U.S. Catholics and 55 percent among all U.S. Protestants.

In South Africa, more calls for Zuma to go

At a May Day rally in Bloemfontein, South Africa, South Africa's President Jacob Zuma was jeered by labor activists and his speech was cancelled after scuffles broke out between his supporters and workers.

AP Photo/Khothatso Mokone

Despite months of accelerating crises in South Africa, President Jacob Zuma shows no inclination to accede to the demands of critics that he step down. In April, rifts within the ruling alliance that includes his African National Congress grew severe. At a May Day celebration hosted by the Congress of South African Trade Unions, the embattled president was booed into silence by angry union members.

On April 29 the Western Cape High Court ruled that Mr. Zuma's attempts to make a deal with Russia to build nuclear power plants in South Africa were invalid and unconstitutional. Shortly after that decision, a former associate of Mr. Zuma's filed an affidavit alleging that the president had tried to bribe him in the late 1990s during an infamous arms deal scandal.

Meanwhile, opposition parties of all stripes, joined by representatives from civil society, continued protests against the president throughout April. The demonstrations began in response to the sacking in March of Pravin Gordhan, the finance minister, who had been investigating financial misdeeds of the president. That move led to growing resistance to the president from within his own African National Congress and demands for his resignation from within A.N.C. leadership.

The termination of Mr. Gordhan also led to the downgrade of South Africa's international debt to junk status. Zuma loyalists mocked the downgrade, with one observing, "Most black people are born in junk status, so they aren't bothered."

South Africa's currency, the rand, went into a steep dive on the markets. South Africa's government and businesses now face the possibility of much higher interest rates on loans and the prospect that many corporations will not invest in the country.

Despite all the pressure, Mr. Zuma's political resilience—the "Teflon president," many call him here—should not be underestimated. After a cabinet reshuffling put loyalists in key positions, the president and his faction within the A.N.C. now control not only the "security cluster" of state ministries—defense, security, police and intelligence—but also the "economic cluster"— finance, trade and industry, and by extension the treasury and revenue service. He also dominates the national leadership of the A.N.C. and as a result the party's parliamentary majority. He is unlikely to be impeached. Nor will he voluntarily step down—the moment he does so, he will face up to 770 criminal charges.

He may remain in power until the next general election in 2019. After two five-year terms, he is barred from running again.

What of the A.N.C.'s upcoming electoral conference in December? Mr. Zuma and his colleagues are already quietly promoting presidential candidates acceptable to them. This is essential to the president. At the very least he needs someone willing to offer him a presidential pardon, or he may be seeking a malleable leader whom he can guide from the shadows in what one might call a "Putin scenario."

How will Mr. Zuma's continuing leadership affect the 2019 election? Though the A.N.C. has lost ground, neither of the alternatives to it—the Democratic Alliance and the Economic Freedom Fighters—has sufficient strength on its own to govern. While an alliance of convenience is possible, it would look, in United States terms, a bit like a Jeb Bush-Bernie Sanders coalition: a union of polar opposites.

To many a disaffected South African voter, the instability that combination suggests might be daunting, leading to a "better the devil we know" choice in 2019.

Anthony Egan, S.J., *Johannesburg correspondent.*

I-Spy in China: a revival of Mao-era paranoia?

During the tumultuous Mao Zedong era, China's children were taught at school to be on the lookout for spies, who might be lurking anywhere, and to report them promptly. Many innocent people wrongly accused were brutally persecuted or killed as "class enemies" in the numerous political movements throughout the 1950s and '60s, especially during the Cultural Revolution.

China has come a long way since then. But 40 years after the end of the Cultural Revolution, schoolchildren in China are once again being mobilized for an anti-espionage drive reminiscent of the Mao era. Primary and secondary schoolchildren are the targets of a national security education campaign to "mobilize them as a huge counterspy force," the English-language state newspaper Global Times reported in mid-April. To mark "National Security Education Day" on April 15 as the first step in a national pilot scheme, the eastern province of Jiangsu launched a set of school textbooks that feature themes like "National security is of paramount importance" and "We cannot let down our guard even during peacetime."

According to state reports, the books use easy-to-read language and comic strips to explain to children the concept of national security and to teach them about threats posed by spies, as well as "how to spot potential terror threats." The anti-espionage drive is part of a broader national security campaign.

China implemented its first Counter-Espionage Law in November 2014, and in July 2015 it passed a National Security Law that grants wide-ranging powers to cope with what officials said was an increasingly "severe" national security situation. Earlier in April, Beijing authorities offered cash rewards of up to 500,000 yuan (U.S. $72,400) to citizens who report foreign spies or activities that they believe are endangering state security or involve the theft of state secrets.

Cartoons and video clips have been posted on microblog accounts of China Central Television, the Communist Party Youth League and the Ministry of Public Security showing how ordinary people can identify spies and to encourage them to report suspicious people to the authorities. "Come on, be brave, go and report!" said a narrator to the beat of rap music on a video.

Since President Xi Jinping came to power in late 2012, he has repeatedly warned about "unprecedented security risks" faced by the country. He personally heads the National Security Commission, which he created in late 2013. He has emphasized that national security must be under "the absolute leadership of the Communist Party" and told officials to take pre-emptive steps to prevent "all kinds of risks" to national security.

Mr. Xi, in an internal speech made early in his presidency, lamented the collapse of the Soviet Union, blaming it on a lapse in ideological control. Since then, Mr. Xi has overseen a tightening of ideological control and a clampdown on civil society, silencing liberal scholars and cracking down on human rights lawyers, dissidents, activists and nongovernmental organization workers.

Observers say the mobilization of ordinary people to report on spies is a throwback to the disastrous Mao era, in which there were constant rumors of neighbors, colleagues and classmates being secret spies of foreign powers.

"These unsubstantiated rumors of the Mao era led to countless human rights violations and countless ruined lives," said William Nee, China researcher at Amnesty International. "Since the Chinese government has not dealt with history honestly or objectively, it is no wonder that it seems to be willing to repeat the same mistakes." Mr. Nee said the real goal of the national security education campaign seemed to be to create "an atmosphere of paranoia" and to indoctrinate Chinese society, especially the young, to be inherently suspicious of foreigners, foreign ideas and foreign organizations.

Photo: iStock photo by AlexaZLV

Verna Yu, *Hong Kong correspondent.*

Church leaders urge Senate fix on G.O.P. Obamacare repeal

In a response that came just hours after the U.S. House of Representatives passed the American Health Care Act, Bishop Frank J. Dewane of Venice, Fla., chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, called on the Senate to strip out "harmful" provisions of the bill when the chamber takes it up for consideration or else to essentially start over on Republican efforts to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act of 2010.

Bishop Dewane advised senators that the A.H.C.A. "contains major defects, particularly regarding changes to Medicaid that risk coverage and affordability for millions." Speaking on behalf of the U.S. bishops on May 4, he said, "The A.H.C.A. does offer critical life protection...[but] vulnerable people must not be left in poor and worsening circumstances as Congress attempts to fix the current and impending problems with the Affordable Care Act.

"When the Senate takes up the A.H.C.A., it must act decisively to remove the harmful proposals from the bill that will affect low-income people—including immigrants—as well as add vital conscience protections, or begin reform efforts anew," said Bishop Dewane.

In a statement that also followed the House vote, Carol Keehan, D.C., president and C.E.O. of the Catholic Health Association of the United States, expressed deep disappointment with the House approval of the A.H.C.A. According to Sister Keehan, the A.H.C.A.-proposed restructuring and cuts to Medicaid "will have devastating consequences for the many poor and vulnerable populations who rely on the program." She said, "The most recent amendments to the bill did nothing to alleviate those concerns, and in fact have made the legislation even more troubling by jeopardizing important protections for those with pre-existing conditions."

Kevin Clarke, ***chief correspondent. Twitter: @clarkeatamerica.***

President Trump joins House Speaker Paul Ryan in the Rose Garden of the White House, celebrating on May 4 after the House pushed through its Obamacare repeal.

AP Photo/Evan Vucci

THE CHURCH AND THE L.G.B.T. PERSON: A MINISTRY OF 'RESPECT, COMPASSION & SENSITIVITY'

By James Martin

CNS photo/Matteo Bazzi, EPA

A protest outside the cathedral in Milan, Italy

The relationship between L.G.B.T. Catholics and the Catholic Church has been at times contentious and combative and at times warm and welcoming. Much of the tension characterizing this complicated relationship results from a lack of communication and a good deal of mistrust between L.G.B.T. Catholics and the hierarchy. What is needed is a bridge between that community and the church.

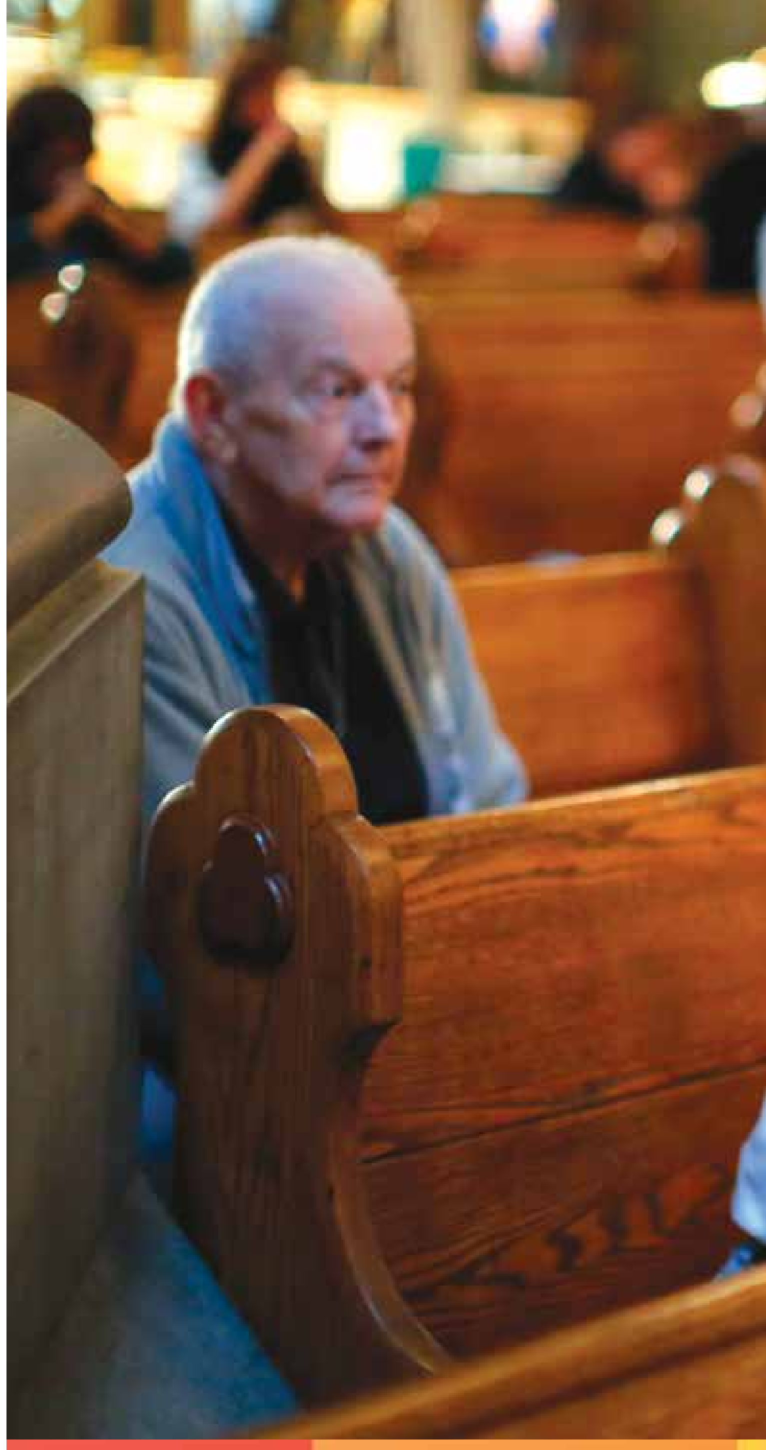
I invite you to walk with me as I describe how we might build that bridge. To that end, in my new book, I offer reflections on both the church's outreach to the L.G.B.T. community and the L.G.B.T. community's outreach to the church, because good bridges take people in both directions.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says that Catholics are called to treat homosexuals with "respect, compassion, and sensitivity" (No. 2358). What might that mean? Let's meditate on that question.

To answer this, it may be helpful to define these two communities. Of course, L.G.B.T. people are part of the church, so those questions imply a false dichotomy. The church is the entire "People of God," to use the language of the Second Vatican Council. So it is strange to discuss how the whole People of God can relate to a part of the People of God. In good Jesuit fashion, then, let me refine our terms.

When I refer to the church in this discussion I mean the *institutional church*—the Vatican, the hierarchy, church leaders, the clergy and all who work in an official capacity in the church.

Let us begin, in this article, by walking on the first lane of the bridge, the one leading from the institutional church to the L.G.B.T. community, and reflect on what might it mean for the church to treat that community with "respect, compassion and sensitivity."



RESPECT

First of all, respect means, at the very least, recognizing that the L.G.B.T. community *exists*, extending to it the same recognition that any community desires and deserves because of its presence among us.

In the wake of the mass killings at the gay nightclub in Orlando last year, some church leaders spoke of the event without ever mentioning the words *L.G.B.T.* and *gay*. To me, that revealed a certain failure to acknowledge the existence of this community. But this is not a Christian model, for Jesus recognizes all people, even those who seem invisible in the greater community. In fact, he reaches out specifically to those on the margins. Catholics, therefore, have a responsibility to make everyone feel visible and valuable.

Recognizing that L.G.B.T. Catholics exist has important pastoral implications. It means carrying out ministries to these communities, which some dioceses and parishes already do very well. Examples include celebrating Masses with L.G.B.T. groups, sponsoring diocesan and parish outreach programs, and in general helping L.G.B.T. Catholics feel that they are part of the church, that they are welcomed and loved.

Some Catholics object to this approach, saying that any outreach is a tacit agreement with everything that any-

Catholics have a responsibility to make everyone feel visible and valuable.

Photo: Getty Images/AFP/ Kena Betancur

one in the L.G.B.T. community says or does. This seems an unfair objection, because it is raised with virtually no other group. If a diocese sponsors, for example, an outreach group for Catholic business leaders, it does not mean that the diocese agrees with every value of corporate America. Nor does it mean that the church has sanctified everything that every businessman or businesswoman says or does. No one suggests that. Why not? Because people understand that the diocese is trying to help the members of that group feel more connected to their church, the church they belong to by virtue of their baptism.

Second, respect means calling a group what it asks to be called. On a personal level, if someone says to you, "I prefer to be called Jim instead of James," you would naturally listen and call him by the name he prefers. It is common courtesy.

It is the same on a group level. We do not use the term "Negroes" any longer. Why? Because that group feels more comfortable with other names, like African-Americans or blacks. Recently I was told that "disabled persons" is not as

acceptable as "people with disabilities." So now I will use the latter term. Why? Because it is respectful to call people by the name they choose. Everyone has a right to the name they wish to be called by.

This is not a minor concern. In the Jewish and Christian traditions names are important. In the Old Testament, God gives Adam and Eve the authority to name the creatures (Gn 2:18–23). God also renames Abram as Abraham (Gn 17:4–6). A name in the Hebrew Scriptures stands for a person's identity; knowing a person's name means, in a sense, that you know the person. That is one reason why, when Moses asks to know God's name, God says, "I am who am" (Ex 3:14–15)—in other words, as my Old Testament professor once explained to our class, "None of your business."

Later, in the New Testament, Jesus renames Simon as Peter (Mt 16:18; Jn 1:42). The persecutor Saul renames himself Paul (Acts 13:9). Names are important in our church today as well. The first question a priest or deacon asks parents at an infant's baptism in the Catholic Church is, "What name do you give this child?"

Because names are important, church leaders are invited to be attentive to how they name the L.G.B.T. community. Let us lay to rest phrases like "afflicted with same-sex attraction," which no L.G.B.T. person I know uses, and even "homosexual person," which seems overly clinical to many. Let us instead listen to what our gay brothers and lesbian sisters prefer. Instead of prescribing what names to use—though "gay," "lesbian," "L.G.B.T." and "L.G.B.T.Q" are the most common—I invite church leaders to recognize that people have a right to name themselves. Using those names is part of respect. And if Pope Francis and several of his cardinals and bishops can use the word *gay*, as they have done several times during his papacy, so can the rest of the church.

Respect also means acknowledging that L.G.B.T. Catholics bring unique gifts to the church—both as individuals and as a community. These gifts build up the church in special ways, as St. Paul wrote when he compared the people of God to a human body (1 Cor 12:12–27). Every body part is important: the hand, the eye, the foot. In fact, as Paul said, it is the parts of the body that "we think less honorable" that deserve even greater respect.

Many L.G.B.T. people have indeed felt "less honorable" in the church. So, following St. Paul, it is to these members and to their gifts that we should pay even *greater* respect. "Those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor," he writes.

Consider for a moment the many gifts brought by L.G.B.T. Catholics who work in parishes, schools, chanceries, retreat centers, hospitals and social service agencies. Let us "honor" them, as St. Paul says. As one example, some of the most gifted music ministers I have known in my almost 30 years as a Jesuit have been gay men who have brought tremendous joy to their parishes, week in and week out, during every liturgical season. They themselves are among the most joyful people I know in the church.

The church, as a whole, is invited to meditate on how L.G.B.T. Catholics build up the church with their presence, in the same way that elderly people, teenagers, women, people with disabilities, various ethnic groups or any other groups build up a parish or a diocese. Although it is usually wrong to generalize, we can still pose the question: What might those gifts be?

Many, if not most, L.G.B.T. people have endured, from an early age, misunderstanding, prejudice, hatred, persecution, and even violence and therefore often feel a natural compassion toward the marginalized. *Compassion* is a gift. They have often been made to feel unwelcome in their parishes and in their church, but they persevere because of their vigorous faith. *Perseverance* is a gift. They are often forgiving of clergy and other church employees who treat them like damaged goods. *Forgiveness* is a gift. Compassion, perseverance, forgiveness are all gifts.

Let me add another gift: that of celibate priests and brothers who are gay, and chaste members of men's and women's religious orders who are gay or lesbian. Now, there are many reasons why almost no gay and lesbian clergy or religious are public about their sexuality. Among these reasons: They are simply private people; their bishops or religious superiors ask them not to speak about it; they themselves are uncomfortable with their sexuality; or they fear reprisals from parishioners.

But there are hundreds, perhaps thousands, of holy and hardworking gay clergy, and gay and lesbian members of religious orders, who live out their promises of celibacy and vows of chastity and help to build up the church. They freely give their whole selves to the church. They themselves are the gift.

Seeing, naming and honoring all their gifts are components of respecting our L.G.B.T. brothers and sisters. So is accepting them as beloved children of God and *letting them know* that they are beloved children of God. The church has a special call to proclaim God's love for a people who are often made to feel, whether by their families, neighbors

Photo: iStockphoto.com/Mari

or religious leaders, as though they were damaged goods, unworthy of ministry and even subhuman. The church is invited to both proclaim and demonstrate that L.G.B.T. people are beloved children of God.

Respect also should be extended to the workplace, especially if that workplace is a church or church-related organization. To that end, I am saddened over the recent trend, in a few places, to fire L.G.B.T. men and women. Of course, church organizations have the authority to require their employees to follow church teachings. The problem is that this authority is applied in a highly selective way. Almost all the firings in recent years have focused on L.G.B.T. matters. Specifically, the firings have usually related to those employees who have entered into same-sex marriages, which is against church teaching, when one or the other partner has a public role in the church.

But if adherence to church teaching is going to be a litmus test for employment in Catholic institutions, then dioceses and parishes need to be consistent. Do we fire a straight man or woman who gets divorced and then remarries without an annulment? Divorce and remarriage of that sort are against church teaching. In fact, divorce is something Jesus himself forbade. Do we fire women who bear children out of wedlock? How about people who are living together without being married? Do we give pink slips to those who use artificial contraception? Those actions are against church teaching too.

And what about church employees who are not Catholic? If we fire employees who do not agree with or adhere to church teaching, do we fire all Protestants who work in a Catholic institution, because they do not believe in papal authority? That's an important church teaching. Do we fire Unitarians who do not believe in the Trinity?

Do we fire these people for these things? No, we do not. Why not? Because we are selective, perhaps unconsciously, perhaps consciously, about which church teachings matter.

Here is another way of looking at this kind of selectivity, one that shows us why it is problematic. Requiring church employees to adhere to church teachings means, at a more fundamental level, adhering to the Gospel. To be consistent, shouldn't we fire people for not helping the poor, for not being forgiving or for not being loving?

That may sound odd, and it may even cause you to roll your eyes, but why should it? These commands of Jesus are the most essential church teachings.

The selectivity of focus on L.G.B.T. matters when it comes to firings is, to use the words of the *Catholic Catechism*, a "sign of unjust discrimination" (No. 2358), something we are to avoid. Indeed, in 2016, **America** magazine published an editorial that said, "The high public profile of these firings, when combined with the apparent lack of due process and the absence of any comparable policing of marital status for heterosexual employees, constitute signs of 'unjust discrimination,' and the church in the United States should do more to avoid them."

COMPASSION

What would it mean for the institutional church to show compassion to L.G.B.T. men and women?

The word *compassion* (from the Greek *paschō*, "to suffer") means "to experience with, to suffer with." What would it mean for the institutional church not only to respect L.G.B.T. Catholics but to be with them, to experience life with them and even to suffer with them?

This question can be asked not only about the hierarchy, but about the entire church. It can be asked not only about bishops and priests but also about pastoral workers, directors of religious education, teachers, administrators and those who do not work in any official capacity in the church but participate in the life of the church as faithful parishioners: Catholic men and women of all sorts. How can all of us experience and suffer with our L.G.B.T. brothers and sisters?

The first and most essential requirement is to listen. It is impossible to experience a person's life, or to be compassionate, if you do not listen to the person or if you do not ask questions.

Questions that Catholic leaders might ask their L.G.B.T. brothers and sisters are:

What was it like growing up as a gay boy, a lesbian girl or a transgender person?

What is your life like now?

How have you suffered as a result of your orientation?

Where do you experience joy in your life?

What is your experience of God?

What is your experience of the church?

What do you hope for, long for, pray for?

For the church to exercise compassion, we need to listen.

When we listen, we will hear the calls for help and prayer. When our L.G.B.T. brothers and sisters are persecuted, church leaders are called to stand with them. In many parts of the world, L.G.B.T. persons often experience appalling incidents of, in the words of the *Catechism*, "unjust discrimination"—prejudice, violence and even murder. In some countries, a person can be jailed or even executed for being gay or having same-sex relations.

In those countries, the institutional church has an absolute moral duty to stand up for its brothers and sisters, publicly. Sadly, this does not happen very often, and in fact a few church leaders have supported some of these discriminatory laws. But embedded in Catholic teaching is a call to stand with our L.G.B.T. brothers and sisters. The *Catechism* says "every sign of unjust discrimination" must be avoided. More fundamentally, helping someone, standing up for someone who is being beaten, is surely part of compassion. It is part of being a disciple of Jesus Christ. If you doubt that, read the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25–37).

Closer to home, what would it mean for the church in the United States to say, when needed, "It is wrong to treat the L.G.B.T. community like this"? Catholic leaders regularly publish statements—as they should—defending the unborn, refugees and migrants, the poor, the homeless, the aged.

This is one way to stand with people: by putting yourself out there, even taking heat for them.

But where are statements in support of our L.G.B.T. brothers and sisters? When I ask this, some people say, "You can't compare what refugees face with what L.G.B.T. people face." As someone who worked with refugees in East Africa for two years, I know that is often the case.

But it is important not to ignore the disproportionately high rates of suicide among L.G.B.T. youths and the fact that L.G.B.T. people are the victims of proportionally more hate crimes than any other minority group in this country. The bullying of L.G.B.T. students in schools is also an evil that should be squarely opposed, particularly given the Catholic Church's long history and extensive experience with running elementary, middle and high schools.

CNS photo/Karen Callaway, Catholic New World

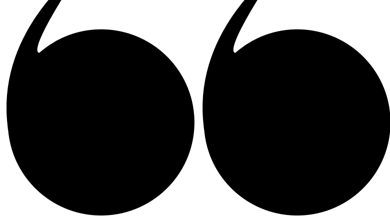
As I have mentioned before, in the wake of the massacre at a gay nightclub in Orlando in 2016, when the L.G.B.T. community across the country was grieving, I was discouraged that more bishops did not immediately signal their support. Some did, of course. But imagine if the attacks were on, God forbid, a Methodist parish. Many bishops would have said, "We stand with our Methodist brothers and sisters." Why didn't more Catholic leaders name our L.G.B.T. brothers and sisters in Orlando? To me, it seemed a failure of compassion, a failure to experience with and a failure to suffer with. The Orlando massacre invites us all to reflect on this.

We need not look far for a model for this. God did this for all of us—in Jesus. The opening lines of the Gospel of John tell us, "The Word became flesh and lived among us" (1:14). The original Greek is more vivid: "The Word became flesh and pitched its tent among us" (*eskēnōsen en hēmin*). God entered our world to live among us. This is what Jesus did. He lived alongside us, took our side, even died like us.

This is what the church is called to do with all marginalized groups, as Pope Francis has often reminded us, including L.G.B.T. Catholics: to experience their lives and suffer with them.

And to be joyful with them as well! Because Jesus came to experience all parts our lives, not just the sorrowful parts. L.G.B.T. people, though they may suffer persecution, share in the joys of the human condition. So, can you rejoice with our L.G.B.T. brothers and sisters?

Can the entire church—from the pope to the local bishops to priests to pastoral associates to parishioners—rejoice in the gifts and talents, the joy and enthusiasm brought by L.G.B.T. Catholics? Especially among younger L.G.B.T. people, I find a tremendous zest for the faith. Perhaps this is because, unlike their older brothers and sisters, they have grown up in a society where they feel more comfortable about their sexuality, and so they may feel



One reason the institutional church has struggled with sensitivity is that, as far as I have observed, many church leaders still do not know many gay and lesbian people.

less burdened by their sexual identity. (This is just my own supposition.) Overall, younger L.G.B.T. people who are active in the church bring a great many gifts, which we can celebrate and treasure.

We can celebrate and treasure more than simply their gifts. We can celebrate and treasure their whole selves. This is a kind of compassion too—to share in the experience of Christian joy that L.G.B.T. men and women, young and old, bring to the church.

SENSITIVITY

How can the institutional church be "sensitive" toward L.G.B.T. people?

Merriam-Webster's Dictionary defines sensitivity as "an awareness or understanding of the feelings of other people." That is related to Pope Francis' call for the church to be a church of "encounter" and "accompaniment."

To begin with, it is nearly impossible to know another person's feelings at a distance. You cannot understand the feelings of a community if you do not *know* the community. You cannot be sensitive to the L.G.B.T. community if you only issue documents about them, preach about them or tweet about them, without knowing them.

One reason the institutional church has struggled with sensitivity is that, as far as I have observed, many church leaders still do not know many gay and lesbian people. The temptation here is to smile and say that church leaders do know people who are gay: priests and bishops who are not public about their homosexuality.

But my point is a larger one. Many church leaders do not know, on a personal level, L.G.B.T. people who are public about their sexuality. That lack of familiarity and friendship means it is more difficult to be sensitive. How can you be sensitive to people's situations if you do not know them? So one invitation is for the hierarchy to come to know L.G.B.T. Catholics as friends.

In 2015 Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, the archbishop of Vienna, reminded us of this at the meeting of the Synod of Bishops on the family, the gathering of Catholic bishops who assembled at the invitation of Pope Francis to discuss a wide variety of issues related to the family and, as it turned out, human sexuality.

Around that time, Cardinal Schönborn spoke of a gay couple he knew who had transformed his understanding of L.G.B.T. people. He even offered some qualified praise for his friend's same-sex union. The cardinal said:

"One shares one's life, one shares the joys and sufferings, one helps one another. We must recognize that this person has made an important step for his own good and for the good of others, even though, of course, this is not a situation that the church can consider regular."

He also overruled a priest in his archdiocese who had prohibited a man in a same-sex union from serving on a parish council. That is, Cardinal Schönborn stood with his L.G.B.T. brother. Much of this came from his experience of, knowledge of, and friendship with L.G.B.T. people. Cardinal Schönborn said the church "must accompany people."

In this, as in all things, Jesus is our model. When Jesus encountered people on the margins, he saw not categories but individuals. To be clear, I am not saying that the L.G.B.T. community should be, or should feel, marginalized. Rather, I am saying that within the church many of them do find themselves marginalized. They are seen as "other." But for Jesus there was no "other."

Jesus saw beyond categories; he met people where they were and accompanied them. The Gospel of Matthew,

for example, tells the story of Jesus meeting a Roman centurion who asked for healing for his servant (8:5–13). Although the man was not Jewish, Jesus saw a man in need and responded to his need.

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus meets Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector in Jericho (19:1–10). In that story, Zacchaeus, who is described as "short in stature," climbs a sycamore tree because "he wanted to see who Jesus was." When Jesus sees Zacchaeus perched in the tree, he sees a person seeking to encounter him. And even though the chief tax collector would have been considered the "chief sinner" in that society, Jesus invites himself to Zacchaeus's house to meet with him over dinner.

Jesus was willing to be with, stand with and befriend these people.

The movement for Jesus was always from the outside in. His message was always one of inclusion, communicated through speaking to people, healing them and offering them what biblical scholars call "table fellowship"—that is, dining with them, a sign of welcome and acceptance in first-century Palestine. In fact, Jesus was often criticized for this practice.

Jesus' movement was about inclusion. He was creating a sense of "us."

For with Jesus there is no us and them. There is only us.

One common objection here is to say, "No, Jesus always told people, first of all, not to sin!" We cannot meet L.G.B.T. people because they are sinning, goes the argument, and when we do meet them, the first thing we must say is, "Stop sinning!"

But, more often than not, this is not Jesus' way. In the story of the Roman centurion, Jesus does not shout, "Pagan!" or scold him for not being Jewish. Instead, he professes amazement at the man's faith and then heals his servant. Likewise, in the story of Zacchaeus, after spying the tax collector perched in the tree, he does not point to him and shout, "Sinner!" Instead, Jesus says that he will dine at Zacchaeus's house, in a public sign of openness and welcome, before Zacchaeus has said or done anything. Only after Jesus offers him welcome is Zacchaeus moved to conversion, promising to pay back anyone he might have defrauded.

For Jesus it is most often *community first*—meeting, encountering, including—and *conversion second.*

Pope Francis echoed this approach in an in-flight press conference in 2016, on his return to Rome from the countries of Georgia and Azerbaijan. "People must be accompanied, as Jesus accompanied," he said. "When a person who has this situation comes before Jesus, Jesus will surely not say: 'Go away because you're homosexual.'"

Sensitivity is based on encounter, accompaniment and friendship.

Where does that lead? To the second meaning of sensitivity, which is, in common parlance, a heightened awareness of what might hurt or offend someone. When we are "sensitive" to people's situations, we are "sensitive" to anything that might needlessly offend.

One way to be sensitive is to consider the language we use. Some bishops have already called for the church to set aside the phrase "objectively disordered" when it comes to describing the homosexual inclination (as it is used in the *Catechism*, No. 2358). The phrase relates to the orientation, not the person, but it is still needlessly hurtful. Saying that one of the deepest parts of a person—the part that gives and receives love—is "disordered" in itself is needlessly cruel.

Setting aside such language was discussed at the meeting of the Synod on the family, according to several news outlets. Later, in 2016, an Australian bishop, Vincent Long Van Nguyen, said in a lecture:

"We cannot talk about the integrity of creation, the universal and inclusive love of God, while at the same time colluding with the forces of oppression in the ill treatment of racial minorities, women, and homosexual persons.... It won't wash with young people, especially when we purport to treat gay people with love and compassion and yet define their sexuality as 'intrinsically disordered.'"

Part of sensitivity is understanding all of this.

Overall, the church is invited to live out the call to treat L.G.B.T. people with true respect, compassion and sensitivity. The *Catechism* requires this; but it is Christ who asks.

James Martin, S.J., *is editor at large at* ***America.*** *This essay is a lightly edited excerpt from* Building a Bridge: An Invitation to the Catholic Church and the L.G.B.T. Community to Enter into a Relationship of Respect, Compassion and Sensitivity, *which is being published in June by HarperOne.*

IN JEFFERSON'S SHADOW

Photo: Norm Shafer for The Washington Post via Getty Images

Can Catholic theology thrive at a public university?

By Nichole M. Flores

In seventh grade, I posted a picture of a cross adorned with roses inside my locker. I had drawn it with markers on a sheet of notebook paper during homeroom. A teacher noticed the drawing and asked me to take it down. She informed me that religion was not allowed in public school and scolded me for breaching what Thomas Jefferson famously called the "wall of separation" between church and state. Embarrassed, I immediately removed the image from my locker. This was my earliest lesson about the role of faith in public institutions: I would do well to keep my religious beliefs out of view.

The Rotunda at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville

So it was with no little trepidation that I accepted a position in the religious studies department at the University of Virginia, founded by our third president and known affectionately to students and faculty as Mr. Jefferson's University. I had managed to stay squarely on one side of "the wall" for my first two decades in academia. After earning two degrees in theology (at private institutions), I joined the faculty of Saint Anselm College, a Catholic, Benedictine liberal arts school in Manchester, N.H. There I could pursue theology in its purest sense, as *fides quaerens intellectum*—faith seeking understanding—to use the words of St. Anselm of Canterbury.

Moving from Saint Anselm's college to a public university, I was confronted with questions about how I would teach the Catholic theological tradition in an institution founded, in part, to keep theology on the margins of academic discourse. Thomas Jefferson gave architectural representation to this commitment by replacing the chapel typically located at the center of universities with a library housed inside of the gleaming Rotunda. I faced a barrage of questions from my former colleagues: Why would a Catholic theologian want to work in such an environment? Is it possible to translate the richness of the Catholic tradition without transgressing the boundary between church and state? How can you shed light on the Catholic tradition without stating anything as truth?

I shared their concerns: Could I really teach theology, in its confessional fullness, at a public university?

A WALL OF SEPARATION

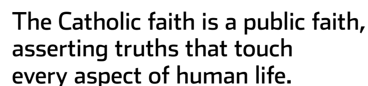
The answer depends on how one conceives of the disciplines of theology and religious studies. Theology reasons from within a particular tradition. It is often a confessional activity, one that involves the pursuit of truth through reflection on Scripture, tradition, reason and experience. But it also has an objective dimension, ideas that can be studied and appreciated regardless of one's personal faith commitments. Religious studies attends to the lived realities of religious traditions. It investigates religion as expressed in the treatises of reformers, in the poetry of mystics, in the lives of martyrs. At a public university, one can earn a degree in religious studies but not in theology. The challenge of teaching about theology within the constraints of religious studies in the public university, then, is to convey the lived reality of faith, illustrating the complex and dynamic relationship between doctrine, belief and practice.

I am not the first Catholic theologian to negotiate the church-state boundary in the context of a public university. Anne Clifford, C.S.J., joined the faculty of Iowa State University in 2008 as the Monsignor James A. Supple Chair of Catholic Studies in the department of philosophy and religious studies. Her research on the doctrine of creation and environmental ethics offers a crucial dimension to public reflection on the global ecological crisis. The university welcomed her arrival, yet she noticed reminders of the wall of separation at every level of her interview to join the faculty.

"I do not know if this is the standard practice for the position or one adopted in response to the fact that I am a vowed woman religious," Sister Clifford says, "but I have tried to conceive of my courses and individual classes with my commitment to the 'separation of church and state' in mind."

Richard Gaillardetz, now the Joseph Chair of Catholic Systematic Theology and chair of the theology department at Boston College, worked for a decade at the University of Toledo. Like Sister Clifford, he found that some university community members were worried about religion having any role in the life of the university. Many of his fellow academics, he says, "presumed outdated 19th-century notions of social scientific 'objectivity' and then used that as the basis to negate any place for theology, properly speaking, to be included in the public conversation of the university." In this theory of knowledge, detachment is consecrated as the first principle. Catholic theology, by definition, cannot be extracted from its foundational principles—faith in the triune God, Scripture as the revealed word of God and the church as mediator of revelation, to name a few—and thus can generate suspicion among those who would seek to protect the religious neutrality of public institutions.

But this drive for scientific objectivity and perfect neutrality fails to account for the ubiquitous presence of religion in U.S. public life. According to the Pew Forum's Religious Landscape Study, more than three-quarters of people in the United States claim to be religious. Religious language pervades political discourse from protests to presidential elections. Religious beliefs are implicated in some of the most challenging social issues of our time. Former Secretary of State John Kerry once warned in the pages of **America** that "we ignore the global impact



The Catholic faith is a public faith, asserting truths that touch every aspect of human life.

of religion at our peril." Failure to attend to the religious dimensions of our common life hinders the pursuit of the common good.

From my perspective as a Catholic theological ethicist, it is precisely theology's strong, consistent affirmation of the particular values of the Catholic social tradition—dignity, justice and the common good—that allows for its unique perspective on the relationship between belief and practice. The Catholic faith is a public faith, asserting truths that touch every aspect of human life. Its public character emerges from its specific theological claim that each human being is created in the image of God and thus has inherent dignity. Scriptural mandates to care for the most vulnerable members of society pervade the church's theological and moral teachings. Implementing these goods calls upon Catholics, and people of different faith traditions, to engage their beliefs in a religiously and culturally pluralistic public realm.

I was grateful to find a community of scholars who either shared, or at least respected, the demands of living out a public faith. Faculty members in my department had a range of relationships to Catholicism: some had been raised Catholic, some had attended Jesuit schools and some were theologians from other traditions. As luck would have it, I moved into the office next to a renowned Jesuit historian who helped me connect to a local parish and kept me grounded in all things Ignatian.

But this hospitable and collaborative environment did not always extend to the rest of the university community. In some quarters, I found my scholarship was considered conservative for engaging sources from deep within the Catholic tradition. In others, I was called a radical for my commitment to social justice and my methodological commitment to experience and context as crucial sources of knowledge. Both camps viewed my work as marginal and dangerously close to breaching the wall.

COMMUNION IN THE CLASSROOM

These tensions take on new dimensions in the undergraduate classroom. Even in classes on Catholic themes, instructors cannot expect students in public universities to have encountered Catholicism. In some cases, Catholicism is entirely novel to students, who have never heard of Mass or the Eucharist, let alone soteriology or subsidiarity. Students are often well versed in individualism and skeptical

Photo: Wikimedia Commons/Karen Blaha

of the call to communion that orients Catholic life.

At times, this proved to be a stumbling block for me. Early in the semester, I bumbled my way through a lecture on human dignity as the bedrock of Catholic ethics while trying to avoid making the vaguest theological truth claims. This lecture had always been my favorite to teach in classrooms at Catholic universities. I taught it well because I hold it to be true. Offering the same lesson in the lecture hall of a public university, I swallowed my enthusiasm in an effort to avoid intellectual or religious bias. Communicating in this way, the lesson lost touch with the power of the Catholic social tradition that has inspired the faithful to struggle for dignity, justice and human rights. My tongue "clung to the roof of my mouth" as I tried to sing the song of my people in a strange land.

But while theologians working in the public university face unique challenges, I have also found they are uniquely positioned to articulate a public theology that can renew the church's engagement with a religiously and politically diverse world. In a public university, the tradition is exposed to new lines of inquiry and criticism on a daily basis, illuminating new questions and seeing enduring ones in a new light. For example, the concept of human dignity in Catholic theology is robustly communal; human beings are created in the image of a specifically Trinitarian God. Arguing this idea in the public university, one is likely to receive opposition from several religious and philosophical traditions with more individualistic accounts of human identity. In the context of respectful and collegial dialogue, however, this conflict generates an opportunity ask important questions about one's own tradition and the traditions of others. Does Catholic theology say enough about personal faith and individual rights? Do more individual-centered traditions say enough about social obligations or the necessity of a common good?

And as students bring their perspectives to bear on Catholicism, our theological tradition offers them essential resources for engaged citizenship in the 21st century. Catholic theology offers distinct and identifiable definitions of concepts like dignity, solidarity and mercy. As a global religion with adherents across the world from all walks of life, Catholicism offers a distinctive perspective on our common humanity and the necessity of justice and solidarity for the sake of societal flourishing.

These gifts of Catholic theology in public life were on full display in a seminar I offered this past fall called Religion and the 2016 Elections. The class, held in a room on the ground floor of Mr. Jefferson's Rotunda, was made up of students from a range of religious backgrounds: Catholics and Methodists, atheists and evangelicals. Students

another person's humanity. While the students debated some of the theological and social premises of the Catholic account of civility, they also adopted it as their collective virtue, holding fast to the commitment they made to each other even as the rancorous political season unfolded.

In the days after the election, the students turned to other virtues we had encountered in the Catholic tradition to help them restore their relationships with each other and look toward the future: solidarity and hope. They shared stories of hopes and fears for the next four years, never losing sight of each other's inherent dignity; this felt miraculous during a time of national turmoil and distrust. Catholic theology and practice guided this public conversation, helping the community to pursue a common good even in the most polarized of political environments. Catholic theology thrived in Thomas Jefferson's Rotunda, revealing its insights for a world longing for humanizing hope.

followed media coverage of religion and the presidential campaigns, interpreting these stories in light of their readings in religious and theological thought. The elections took on a sense of urgency among a variety of religious communities, their concerns ranging from abortion to immigration to the economy. Students hotly debated whether abortion should be legal, whether the United States has an obligation to welcome Syrian refugees within our borders and whether the government has a responsibility to care for poor people. Although we discussed matters of public interest, students shared openly their religious and political positions with their classmates in these conversations.

As scandals accumulated and vitriol intensified leading up to Nov. 8, I turned to Catholic virtue ethics to offer guideposts for our conversation. The students were particularly attracted to an essay on the need for civility in support of the common good written by the moral theologian James Keenan, S.J. They appreciated his distinction between civility and politeness, and the need for courage and fortitude in order to pursue this virtue. While civility is a public virtue, the Catholic expression of the virtue is predicated on its service of the common good, in which society has a responsibility to honor the *imago Dei* present in every person. When we begin to think of dignity as inherent to human identity, it becomes more difficult to disrespect

Photo: Wikimedia Commons/Karen Blaha

OF WALLS AND GARDENS

There is a series of walled gardens adjacent to The Lawn, the university's central quad. It is common to see students and community members strolling the paths along the gardens, peering at the beautiful trees and flowers that spill over the side of the walls. There is constant traffic between the gardens: people, plants, birds, squirrels. Each garden delights the eyes, life sipping soft rain, color bursting forth in the warm Virginia sunshine. People gather here to write, sing, paint, talk and pray.

The gardens are bordered by serpentine walls composed of ancient, porous brick, a graceful design chosen by Mr. Jefferson himself. These walls draw boundaries around the garden, but they function more like a frame than a barrier. Each garden is different from the others. One is carefully curated, the next is covered with foliage. One is designed as a structured grid, the next as a labyrinthine path. Each garden has several wooden benches, beckoning visitors to sit and contemplate the particular beauty illuminated there. These gardens foreground something distinctive about the world around them while still existing as a part of the local environment.

To speak of a wall of separation implies that religion and public life are mutually exclusive realms, sealed off from each other in airtight compartments. This language implies that a public life that respects religious freedom is a fortress with high, impenetrable walls. It imagines that

Public universities are at their best when they move from translation to interpretation, seeking to understand traditions on their own terms rather than demanding that all traditions speak the same language.

the business of public life happens behind a veil of ignorance, that the common good can be pursued without accounting for human hopes, human fears and human loves.

If public life were a fortress, it would wall out some of the most monumental contributors to our societal common good. It would exclude the testimonies of Fannie Lou Hamer and Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King Jr. and Cesar Chavez. This cloud of witnesses testifies to the power of particular religious thought, imagery and practice to appeal to a diverse public and to ignite our collective conscience. Their words and actions unveiled something true, good and beautiful accessible to all people.

Perhaps the garden is a better image for our public life. The garden shares ground with the world around it. It participates in the surrounding ecosystem. It is inhabited by the creatures of the wider surroundings, even if is distinct from its immediate environs. The garden foregrounds something particular, inviting us to contemplate the unique constellation of life gathered there.

The garden offers a way forward for engaging Catholic theology in the public university. In the garden of the public university, Catholic theology lives among the flowers of the garden. To encounter this tradition requires attentiveness to its distinctive character. It calls for close examination of its mission, its history, its teachings and its practices. This encounter can be dialogical and argumentative, but it must also be meditative, privileging attentive listening over impressionistic assertion. Coming to know the tradition necessitates spending time in its environment, seeing its place in relation to other modes of inquiry.

Encountering Catholic theology in the public university offers a template for Catholic engagement in a pluralistic society. Greater familiarity with our tradition invites us to explore other traditions. At Iowa State University, Sister Clifford contributes to an interdisciplinary workshop on sustainability systems that reflects on the interaction between natural and human ecologies. Her environmental theology enriches the intellectual soil at Iowa State even as her own thinking is nurtured in conversations across disciplines. At the University of Toledo, Dr. Gaillardetz offered his expertise in Catholic theology to an interdisciplinary course on Jesus and film, co-taught with a professor from the film department, in which the students reflected on both the cinematic and theological dimensions of films about Jesus or with Jesus figures.

At the University of Virginia, I find that my own work has become sharper and more persuasive in this public environment as I learn to offer a passionate vision of human identity in relation to God that invites others to learn the language of the Catholic tradition. Public universities are at their best when they move from translation to interpretation, seeking to understand traditions on their own terms rather than demanding that all traditions speak the same language.

I keep an array of Catholic images in my office in the religious studies department: a Jerusalem cross, a painting of La Virgen de Guadalupe and a John August Swanson print featuring Cesar Chavez quotations and images from the United Farm Workers movement. These images are in full view, greeting my students and colleagues when they enter the space. No one has accused me of "breaching the wall" or demanded that I take them down. Instead, students ask me questions about them, and I explain their significance to me and to the world's 1.2 billion Catholics. These images serve as a backdrop for every encounter that takes place in the office: debates about Mariology, contemplation of Sufi poetry or elaboration of concepts in Jewish bioethics. This is religious belief in public view, ensconced within the university walls but looking outward and offering a particular expression of faith in an immensely diverse world.

Nichole M. Flores *is an assistant professor of religious studies at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.*

CALLING YOUNG POETS!

America Media is soliciting the best of student poetry for our web platform.

Poems may address any topic, faith-related or not. We are looking for honest poetry that speaks to the mind and heart.

Send up to three poems (illustrations welcome!) to Poetry Editor Joe Hoover, S.J.: jhoover@americamedia.org.

Or mail them to:

Poetry Editor
America Media
33 W. 60th St., 6th Fl.,
New York, NY 10023

"I sing a song of myself!" —Walt Whitman

Tradition Meets Today

Discover more about our historic apostolate and discern if the Spirit is calling you.

Visit us at www.sulpicians.org

Dedicated to Priestly Formation Since 1641

Society of St. Sulpice
Province of the United States

For 20's and 30's Catholics

The Jesuit Post ("TJP") shows that faith is relevant and God is already at work in today's culture.

thejesuitpost.org

Essays | Blogs
Multi-Media Content

Produced by young Jesuits information, focused on sacred and secular issues, and everything in between. TJP speaks to young adult Catholics and spiritual seekers.

America | MEDIA
A JESUIT MINISTRY

The Jesuit Post is published by America Media, the publisher of *America* magazine. It uploads new content 46 weeks of the year.

UNDER THE GAZE OF DOROTHY

Living with my grandmother's faith By Kate Hennessy

My grandmother, Dorothy Day, believed that to lose one's faith was the greatest sadness. My mother, Tamar, Dorothy's only child, believed to her dying day that she had lost her own faith. What can I make of these two interwoven strands of the most influential women in my life? How do I understand my own sense of faith? Do I have faith?

Photo: Dorothy Day and Tamar Hennessy
(Photo courtesy of the author)

I have often felt that I needed a new vocabulary that speaks to my condition, as the Quakers would say. In fact, I often do not understand what people mean when they talk about "my faith"; they seem to speak a secret language that can feel more punishing than uplifting, more like a proclamation than a way of being. Is there some mysterious transformation that happens inside us when we make a proclamation of faith that I am not seeing?

Growing up with Dorothy and the Catholic Worker as part of my family, I picked up quite a tangle of odd phrases while lingering around the grownups: voluntary and involuntary poverty, Christian anarchism, pacifism, the works of mercy, houses of hospitality, the primacy of conscience. I made what I could of them, growing into them with each passing stage from childhood to young adulthood and now middle age, having interior arguments along the way.

Voluntary poverty was for many years a bone I chewed on as I felt the burden of being raised in involuntary poverty, though this was not so easy to define. At one level, my mother chose a life of voluntary poverty, and it came naturally to her. She did not need much in the way of material goods other than her gardens and tools, her looms and spinning wheels, her kitchen and her books. But as a single mother of nine, she spent years worrying about whether she could put enough food on the table or celebrate Christmas or fix the car or keep the house warm and the water pipes from freezing in the brutal Vermont winters.

But nothing from my upbringing engendered the same weighty feeling and confusion that the basic question of faith did.

TWO FACES OF FAITH

When I was a teenager, I began visiting my grandmother at the Catholic Worker at Maryhouse on East Third Street in New York City. I would travel down by bus from Vermont during school breaks, leaving the hills and trees, the rhythm of the distinct seasons and a life on the farm that I never expected to leave, to enter the grit of New York City in the 1970s, when it was teetering on the edge of bankruptcy. I would be greeted at the double doors of glass and wrought iron by women who were sometimes delighted to see me, sometimes not, then walk up the stairs to that room on the second floor, my grandmother's room, where she spent the last three years of her life.

Her failing health and loss of mobility became my gain as I was able to spend more time with her, a time of listening to her ruminate on her past, often laughing as she did so, or as she read letters from people around the world—a priest in Uruguay, a friend from Mississippi or a member of an ashram in India. Even as a 16-year-old I felt the pull of the magnet that was my grandmother. But I also began to feel a struggle within myself. I was drawn by the power and luminosity of her faith, but I was deeply loyal and more naturally bent toward my mother's way of being: unadorned, unspoken and rooted in the natural world.

It was not until I read my grandmother's diaries that I more clearly understood the pain Dorothy endured as she watched her daughter—the daughter whose birth led to Dorothy's conversion—leave that very church. In 1965, Dorothy wrote: "I consider the loss of faith the greatest of disasters—the greatest unhappiness. How can one help grieving over friends and relatives. How necessary to pray without ceasing for them."

I know she was speaking of us. She was so very careful to never impose this pain on me. She never once, that I can recall, suggested that I go to Mass, though when I did, it was so important to her that she would write of it in her diary. What delicacy, what respect she had for a teenager, I can now see.

But at 16 all I could feel was her penetrating and unnervingly direct gaze, a gaze well known by those who often found themselves pinned by it. (Tamar referred to it as "the Look," which she had, too, though she was unaware of it.) Under that gaze, I felt I had no chance of experiencing anything of the nature and power of my grandmother. Under that gaze, I felt unworthy, particularly when she asked me after I graduated from high school, "Now, what are *you* going to do, Katy?" It is unfortunate that at that moment all I could see was what she had accomplished, not all those steps, whether deliberate or wildly inspired, she had taken to get there. But truthfully, for years, I wanted nothing to do with a church that could leave my mother feeling she had no place in it, that left her with a burden that seemed insupportable.

I believed for decades, as I think my mother also believed, that in the face of Dorothy's faith anything less could only be felt as a lack of faith. The force of her faith was so strong and sure. How could Tamar have felt there was any other way for her to express her own? This tension was passed down to me, and I am learning how to untangle the strands on my own terms. Unlike Tamar, I was not raised in the church; and unlike Dorothy, I am slow and cautious in my approach to faith.

Ultimately, I believe that Tamar did not lose her faith and that I simply grew up with two outwardly different expressions of what that faith can mean. Dorothy provided the ritualistic expression of a deeply held faith she came to as an adult, and she lived a life that acted this out in an open and full-bodied way. Though a cradle Catholic, Tamar came to live a quiet faith, unadorned by ritual, and yet one that also imbued her daily life. Dorothy's gestures were seen by many; Tamar's were seen only by those who knew her intimately. My mother had an abiding belief in the goodness of life and of people, a keen sense, awareness and perceptivity of those—human, creatures or flora—we live with day to day. "Pay attention!" she would scold me. Pay attention to what is going on, both the joy and the suffering. Be with each other, be there, show up. Tamar's was a faith that held at its heart the belief that with loving kindness, and perhaps good soil, we will all flourish.

BETWEEN MOTHER AND DAUGHTER

At a fundamental level, Dorothy believed she could see the face of God in those who are destroyed, rejected and forgotten by society, and Tamar believed we all are children of God. What clearer expressions of faith do I need? Entire treatises could be written on either statement. And so I came to understand that what lingered within me, this history of grandmother and mother, contained no divide, no conflict, no exile.

I have spent the past seven years writing about this relationship between mother and daughter, and many people have asked me what surprised me most during the process. Did I learn anything that I had not known? Dorothy and Tamar were both unusually direct and honest storytellers, so there were no great revelations. But there has been a surprise, and it lies within myself: a deepening sense of falling in love with the two of them not only for their profound love for each other but also for the pain that existed between them. And with this comes my own burgeoning sense of faith—even if I have yet to be able to define this.

Of course, this should have been no surprise at all. I had begun the journey believing, knowing that no one can truly examine Dorothy Day's life without being led to examine one's own. But the depth and meaning of this surprise are a mystery to me, and this mystery is still unfolding, which is as it should be.

Kate Hennessy *is the author of* The World Will Be Saved by Beauty: An Intimate Portrait of My Grandmother. *She is the youngest of Dorothy Day's nine grandchildren.*

Online **Master of Science** in
Catholic Educational Leadership

Become a Leader in 21st-Century Catholic Education

Join a robust network of Fordham faculty, students, and alumni who are preparing Catholic and faith-based schools for a bold future.

Learn about a diverse array of topics:

- educational administration and management
- professional development
- program evaluation
- spirituality of leadership
- social justice and ethics

This 30-credit online program can be completed full time or part time.

Scholarships covering 40 percent of tuition are available for eligible employees of Catholic or faith-based schools.

Check our website for online information sessions.

fordham.edu/CatholicEd

FORDHAM

An inaugural accolade

Remembering John F. Kennedy on his 100th birthday

***America*'s editors managed, to a degree, to contain their enthusiasm for John F. Kennedy's candidacy during the presidential campaign of 1960. Their reaction to his inaugural address, however, delivered on Jan. 20, 1961, was less restrained.**

In editorializing on President Kennedy's Inaugural Address, one is tempted to string together a dozen sparkling quotations and let it go at that. For the materials from which this relatively brief address was fashioned are the heady stuff that history is made of. As Lincoln assuaged the spiritual anguish of a war-sundered nation in his Second Inaugural, as in his First Inaugural Franklin Roosevelt stirred to new hope and enterprise a generation mired in the despondency of economic depression, so did John F. Kennedy rally an apprehensive people to face with confident energy the seemingly insoluble problems of our times.

To some readers this comparison with deathless documents of the past may seem farfetched. After all, nothing the President said on January 20, as a bitter cold wind swept over snow-covered Capitol Hill, has not been said before. The contemporary challenge to freedom is plain for everybody to see. The rise of Castro in Cuba has dramatized the Communist threat to the Western Hemisphere. The anarchy in the Congo, which the Soviet Union and its stooges are recklessly exploiting, has raised the specter of newly independent nations trading 19th-century colonialism for 20th-century slavery. The civil war in Laos provides only the most recent reminder that our unity with "those old allies whose cultural and spiritual origins we share" is less firm than it ought to be. And as background for all this, we have been living for more than a decade now with the awful and frustrating knowledge that while "man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty," he also holds in the same fragile vessels the ability to destroy all human life.

What was there, then, about this Inaugural which in the opinion of some raised it far above pedestrian levels and destined it, perhaps, to a high place in history?

It was written in excellent modern style—lean, terse, evocative. It was rich in literary, biblical and historical overtones. To old friends and ambitious foes, to our neighbors in the hemisphere and the masses of people in underdeveloped lands everywhere, it said with precision, and with feeling deep but disciplined, exactly what should have been said. And the address was studded with quotable gems: "Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate"; "For only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed"; "If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich"; "And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country."

But it was none of these merits that touched the Inaugural with greatness. What gave it distinction is suggested perhaps by a line from one of our American poets. "Each crisis," wrote John Greenleaf Whittier, "brings its word and deed." Early in the address, one sensed that President Kennedy was bringing the word that

answered the need of our troubled age. Harking back to our revolutionary past, he sounded his keynote:

> Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans—born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a cold and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage—and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today.

And what did that torch signify? It signaled that this generation is called, as other generations were called before it, to testify to its loyalty to the American dream:

> Now the trumpet summons us again—not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need—not as a call to battle, though embattled we are—but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out, "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation"—a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself.

Is this challenge one to deplore, to be fearful of, to shrink from?

> In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility. I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation. The energy, the faith and the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it—and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.

So it was that the word spoken by the President—a man who for all his youth has endured pain and lived with death—wedding American idealism and American power, summoned free men to a grand crusade.

Surely, that was the word today's crisis called for—a word that scorned cynicism and routed despair, that soared above sterile caution and the diffidence that sires defeat, that found challenge exhilarating, a word that echoed the ringing words Shakespeare put into the mouth of King Henry V on the eve of Agincourt:

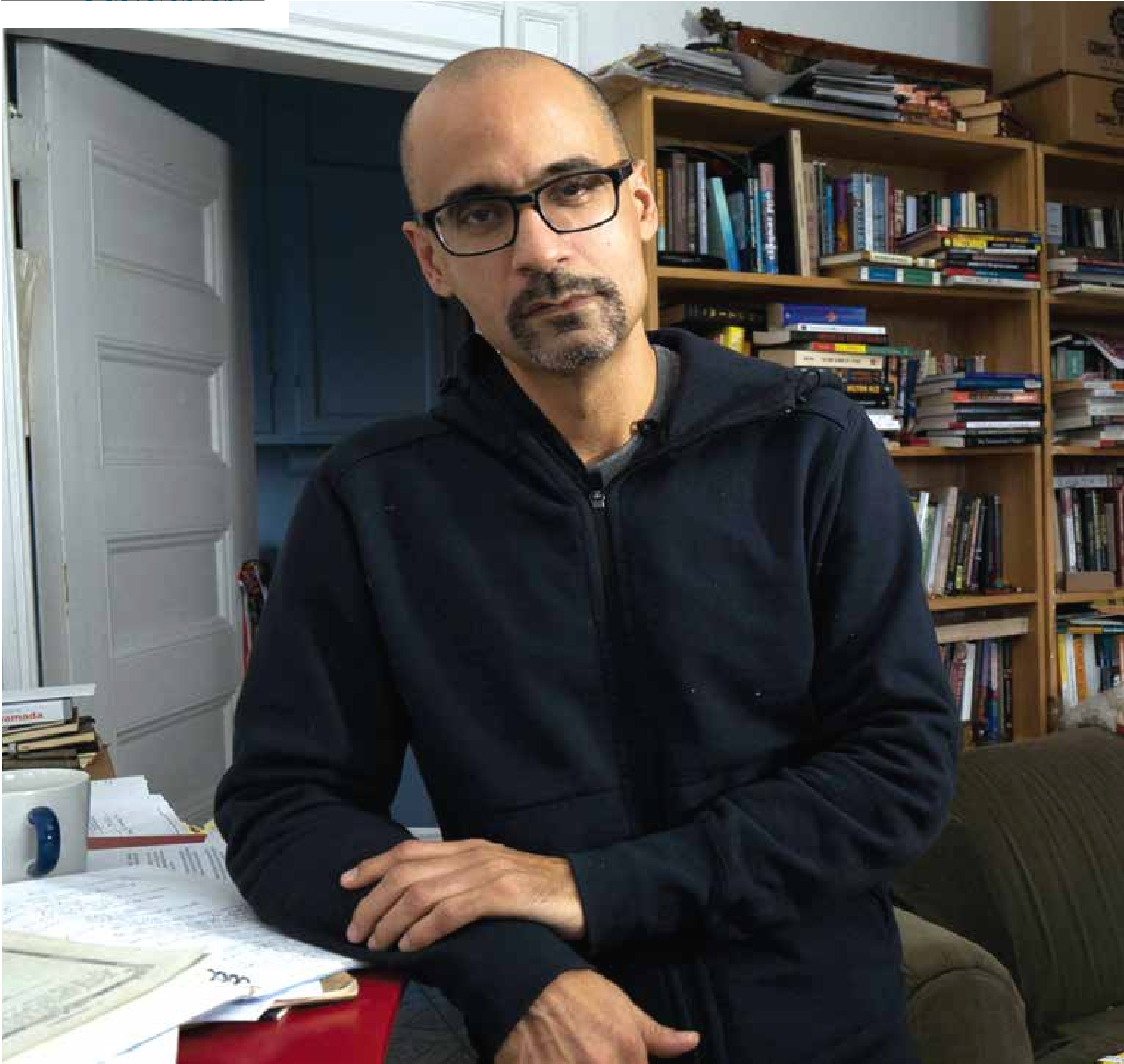
> *From this day to the ending of the world,*
> *But we in it shall be remem-beréd....*
> *And gentlemen in England now a-bed*
> *Shall think themselves ac-curs'd they were not here,*
> *And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks*
> *That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's Day.*

So it was that the word spoken by the President—a man who for all his youth has endured pain and lived with death—wedding American idealism and American power, summoned free men to a grand crusade.

From the word born of the crisis to the deed it demands the gap is wide and treacherous. This, too, the President knows. Counting "a good conscience our only sure reward," he concluded, "let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own."

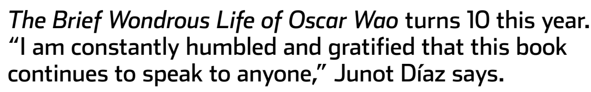
So it must be. Without God's help the deed will not be done. With it, we cannot fail.

Editorial, Feb. 4, 1961



El Sueño Americano de Junot Díaz

By Olga Segura



The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao turns 10 this year. "I am constantly humbled and gratified that this book continues to speak to anyone," Junot Díaz says.

El sueño americano. The American dream. Terrifying, promising and elusive, it pulls us from our native lands. We leave behind families and careers; many of us leave to survive, escaping countries shrouded in violence and death. This dream tells us that no matter our circumstances elsewhere, in America we can make it. In America, the land of opportunity and democracy, anything is possible. *El sueño americano.* It is this dream that is at the center of the 2007 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*.

It is a cold Monday afternoon in early January, and I am in Cambridge, Mass., to discuss the novel, which turns 10 this September, with its author, Junot Díaz. As immigrant children, I begin, we learn at a very young age to view America as a kind of utopia, a place to be lauded. Díaz nods in agreement, settling into the chair across from where I am seated. "From the moment I could remember, it was made very clear to me that I was going to the United States," he says. "There was already the shadow of the United States over all of our lives. There was a sense that the world that we were inhabiting, the people that we were connected to, the neighborhood that was more or less my entire universe, that all of these things would soon vanish."

Born in 1968, Díaz spent the first six years of his life in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. "La Capital" is one of the oldest cities in the Caribbean and home to over three million people. The country shares its home—and complicated history—on Hispaniola with Haiti. Christopher Columbus landed in Santo Domingo in 1492, making it the first city to come under Spanish rule. During this time, the country was populated by Taino Indians. Under Spanish rule, men were used as cheap labor, women were raped, and lands and resources were pillaged. The effects of Spanish colonization were so severe that by 1548 the Taino population had dropped from over 1 million to just 500.

As a result, the Spanish began importing African slaves to the Dominican Republic. The introduction of a new culture directly affected the country, especially its religious practices. Over 90 percent of the country identifies as Christian, half as Roman Catholic. It is not, however, the Roman Catholicism found in the United States or Europe. "In the Dominican Republic, it was very hard to escape the sort of syncretic, Africanized Catholic faiths, plural, that are to be found across the island," Díaz tells me.

Describing this faith in *Oscar Wao,* the author writes, "We postmodern plátanos tend to dismiss the Catholic devotion of our *viejas* as atavistic, an embarrassing throwback to the olden days, but it's exactly at these moments, when all hope has vanished, when the end draws near, that prayer has dominion." The Christian faith of our *viejas*, our mothers and grandmothers, is one shrouded in folklore. "I think that a lot of what I was raised to think of as Dominican was inflected by both religious and supernatural complexes," Díaz tells me.

For the young Díaz, leaving this culture was not easy. "I grew up in this barrio where there's a ton of kids, where all we did was play all damn day. My experience in the Dominican Republic in those years was living in this wonderland," he says. Six years later, he and his family left for the United States, joining his father in Paterson, N.J. The transition was difficult. "I immigrated to central New Jersey. I immigrated to an area where there weren't a lot of Dominicans," he tells me. "I was not a huge fan of the American experience for my first few years. It wasn't until I discovered books that I began to feel any fondness toward this adventure that I was on, this adventure called immigration."

His readers see Díaz's love of books in what he describes to me as "Oscar's nerdology" in *Oscar Wao.* In the author's home in Cambridge, this fondness is more than apparent. There are books everywhere: stacked by the door, on coffee tables, on window sills, on mantels and in various piles throughout the apartment he shares with his partner Marjorie Liu, the New York Times best-selling author and comic book writer.

Reading Díaz's books was the first time I saw myself reflected in literature. Like Díaz, I was born in Santo Domingo, where I would remain for three years before my parents would fly me out to New York City in the winter of 1992. He speaks a dialect I know, one born in the streets of Paterson, the Bronx, Washington Heights, a language born out of our diaspora. It

Photo: America staff

AP Photo/John Riley

is the language we learn, fluently, in the various American pockets we fill when we leave the Island—a mix of English and Spanish, that eclectic mix of "*dimelo!*" and "what's good." It is the bridge between our motherland and this land, a blending of two countries.

It is this language Díaz perfects in his literature.

Junot Díaz's first book was *Drown*. Published in 1996, it is a collection of 10 short stories that first introduced his readers to Yunior de Las Casas. The stories are narrated through the perspective of an adult Yunior, touching on themes related to patriarchal abandonment, homosexuality, immigrant poverty and migration from the Dominican Republic for the United States. The idea for the collection began when Díaz was studying for his M.F.A. at Cornell University. "I was really interested in this idea of telling a story that's a linked group of stories about, basically, how a certain kind of Dominican male subjectivity is formed," Díaz tells me. "I conceived of this family, this narrator, who was simultaneously brilliant and profoundly stupid around women and around intimacy. And once I had Yunior as a concept, as a strategy, the book began to come together." I tell him that *Drown* was the first time I read his work and saw Dominican characters reflected in American literature. "It is a typical coming of age story, from the point of view of our community's craziness," he tells me.

Writing for The New York Times the year of *Drown*'s publication, David Gates compared Díaz to Raymond Carver, one of America's finest short story writers. Like Carver, Díaz "transfigures disorder and disorientation with a rigorous sense of form," Gates wrote. In "How to Date a Browngirl, Blackgirl, Whitegirl, or Halfie," Díaz presents a story written like a how-to manual. The protagonist, listing a variety of ways to "date a browngirl, blackgirl, whitegirl, or halfie," says, "Clear the government cheese from the refrigerator"; "Shower, comb, dress"; "Get up from the couch and check the parking lot." Díaz's prose is methodical, efficient and beautiful. In one of the most poignant lines in this story—and arguably all of *Drown*—Díaz commands, "Run a hand through your hair like the whiteboys do even though the only thing that runs easily through your hair is Africa."

“It was very hard to escape the sort of syncretic, Africanized Catholic faiths that are to be found across” the Dominican Republic, Díaz says.

Writing was not the author’s first career choice. He attended Rutgers University in New Jersey in the early 1990s, and, unlike many of his peers, he had no career path. “I didn’t know what in the world I wanted to be. I loved books to death, I loved history to death. What was I gonna do with that?” At Rutgers, he found himself immersed in the works of Gloria Naylor, Alice Walker, Gloria Anzaldúa and Toni Morrison. “I came of age surrounded in college by these brilliant women of color and their radical epistemologies.” Díaz would later name several of these writers as influences. By his junior year, his focus on writing grew, and every night Díaz spent at least two hours writing. “I was able to do that for a couple of years,” he tells me. “It proved to me that there was more to this dream than just kind of a desire. There was something beneath it.” Ten years after the publication of *Drown*, Díaz would introduce readers to what some have called the greatest novel of the 21st century.

“How long did it take you to write *Oscar Wao*?” I ask. Díaz groans and laughs. “I’m a terribly slow writer. It took about 11 years from those early beginnings to finally getting the last chapter written.”

The first inklings for the book began in 1996. Growing up, Díaz, like most Dominicans, knew of Rafael Leónidas Trujillo Molina. Known as “El Jefe” or The Boss, Trujillo ruled over the Dominican Republic from 1930 until his assassination in 1961. Thirty-one years of the *Trujillato,* the Trujillo Era, left over 50,000 people killed, including over 10,000 Haitians in the Parsley Massacre. “I had a father who was in the post-Trujillo military apparatus, a father who grew up inside of the *Trujillato*, and was very supportive of it,” Díaz says. “My father had a very romantic vision of who Trujillo was. I did not.”

Díaz’s obsession with the dictator was one of the themes he wanted to include in the novel, along with the “nerdology” of the protagonist, Oscar De León. “As I wrote the book, I began to shape both of these projects. They did not emerge fully formed in my head. I didn’t have the idea of what was joining these two narrative strands.”

In *Oscar Wao* we are presented with Oscar, an overweight Dominican boy living in Paterson. He is obsessed with science fiction, falling in love and “getting laid” and the *fukú*, the curse that has plagued the De León family for generations. The story is told through a seemingly ambiguous narrator we eventually realize is *Drown*’s Yunior. Touching on depression, womanhood, death and violence among other issues, Díaz presents three stories of the De León family. We encounter characters who must deal with what it means to be Dominican in a new country, struggling to live out *el sueño americano*.

Díaz captures the tension felt by many immigrants. It is difficult to form one’s identity between two countries, two cultures. This tension is present in Oscar. He does not show the qualities he has been told are those of the archetypal Dominican man. He is a virgin who doesn’t want to be one, a voracious reader immersed in the worlds of J. R. R. Tolkien and Oscar Wilde. He wants to fit in, whether with the students at his college or with the people he meets when he visits the Dominican Republic. In one of Oscar’s most distressing moments, Díaz writes, “The kids of color, upon hearing him speak and seeing him move his body, shook their heads. You’re not Dominican. And he said, over and over again, But I am. *Soy dominicano. Dominicano soy*.”

Then there is Beli, Oscar’s mother, who grew up in the Dominican Republic while Trujillo was in power. Her father is sent to prison by the government, and her mother commits suicide. She is then shuffled from one distant relative to another, until she is finally sold as a child slave. One day, while she attempts to go to school, Beli’s “father” drops hot oil onto her back.

Beli is scarred, emotionally and

Oscar Wao grapples with the grisly legacy of Rafael Trujillo, the former president of the Dominican Republic.

physically. She is eventually found by her aunt, known as La Inca, who dedicates her life to helping Beli make the most of her post-trauma life. But Beli's struggles do not end there. As a teenager, she falls in love with and has an affair with a married man, whose wife is Trujillo's sister. As a result, she is kidnapped and tortured, "beat...like she was a slave. Like she was a dog." It is in this character that we see the grisly legacy of the *Trujillato*. While the story of this family is fictional, the effects of Trujillo's dictatorship are not. "I wanted to understand and capture this phenomena, the political, social, cultural phenomena that was Trujillo," Díaz says.

Oscar Wao also features the juxtaposition of two seemingly different cultures: the Caribbean and science fiction. Reviewing the novel for The New York Times, A. O. Scott wrote that *Oscar Wao* is immersed in "magic realism, punk-rock feminism, hip-hop machismo, post-modern pyrotechnics." I tell Díaz I am surprised at how well he connected these two worlds. He tells me that the connection is more discernible than it may seem at first. "To read science fiction and fantasy is to encounter within it resonances and echoes of the history of the New World, of Dominicans specifically," Díaz says. "Science fiction and fantasy stories are obsessed with these questions of power. They're obsessed with racism. They're saturated with the political unconscious, with the dark energy of colonialism. And it was only when I was writing the book that I became aware of their affinities."

In 2008 *Oscar Wao* was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Fiction. Díaz humbly shrugs when I bring up this honor and instead emphasizes that he is grateful for the spaces it has created for communities of color, particularly Dominicans. "I'm glad it's opened spaces for the Dominican community at a literary level. I am constantly humbled and gratified that this book continues to speak to anyone."

My parents arrived from the Dominican Republic in New York City in the winter of 1991. For that first journey here, they left me behind for a year while they settled in America; the island, however, they left behind, essentially, forever. They left a world that made them happy and comfortable, *por el sueño americano,* they have told me repeatedly throughout my life. Like immigrants before and after them, they struggled. It wasn't until years later that I would learn how difficult it truly was. They arrived with just $90 in their pockets; the uncle on my mother's side who promised to pick them up at John F. Kennedy International Airport was nowhere to be found for almost two weeks; and they had no steady jobs or home for months. It wasn't until years later that I would see these experiences represented in literature, in Díaz's work. And at a time when our political leaders employ harsh anti-immigrant language, reading experiences like the ones described in *Oscar Wao* takes on even more importance.

Photo: Library of Congress/Harris & Ewing Collection

During a Senate floor debate on immigration reform in 2006, Republican Senator Jeff Sessions said, "Fundamentally, almost no one coming from the Dominican Republic to the United States is coming here because they have a provable skill that would benefit us and that would indicate their likely success in our society." Eleven years later, Sessions is now the U.S. attorney general, and this attitude, fueled by the blistering rhetoric of President Trump, has made immigrants something like the national bogeyman.

I bring this up in my conversation with Díaz. I mention the fear among immigrant communities, people of color, women. "This election has revealed this country in ways that little has," he says. "And for me, Trump is not even the worst of it—the worst of it is the culture that could make Trump possible. We just live in a society that is so addicted to xenophobia, to blind bias."

So, does this change the role of the writer, I ask. Díaz tells me that the role of the writer is the same it has always been, to continue pushing boundaries. "As artists, we're not here to comfort anyone. If you want to have your back rubbed, you don't come to the arts for that," he says. "We're as artists here to point out the things that we don't like to point out. We're the anti-politicans," he proclaims, "We're actually trying to make the country better."

Olga Segura *is an associate editor of* ***America.***

To hear more from Junot Díaz, visit americamagazine.org.

Astereognosis

[a loss of the ability to recognize objects by handling them]

By Amit Majmudar

Starknowing. He places his hand in hers,
but she doesn't recognize it. What was love once
is beyond forgotten now, is never having known
at all. Astereognosis, agnosis, No is
the only word her tongue recognizes
by its shape, four thorns and a nubbin bud.
Hands can forget shapes, and his,
in time, will forget hers—palmblind, unable
to tell her skin from yesterday's breeze.
He closes his eyes, and this weightless edgeless
textureless something in his hands
may well be the night sky
on a planet orbiting
an unknowable star. This feels
unfamiliar, but so does everything,
for both of them. The shape
the silence makes between them
is either a love poem
or a love-poem-shaped goodbye.

Amit Majmudar *is a diagnostic nuclear radiologist. His work has appeared in The New York Times, The New Yorker and* The Best American Poetry 2017. *His next book will be a verse translation of the* Bhagavad-Gita, *entitled* Godsong *(Knopf).*

The lynching that shook the conscience of the world

By Shannen Dee Williams

Before there was Trayvon Martin, Rekia Boyd, Tamir Rice and Michael Brown Jr., there was a 14-year-old boy from Chicago named Emmett Louis Till. Save for the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King in 1968, no hate murder had a greater impact on the 20th-century struggle for African-American freedom than the lynching of Till in Money, Miss., in 1955. Indeed, the image of Till's mangled body, which circulated widely in the African-American and global press, became one of the most powerful symbols of the uncompromising savagery of white supremacy in the United States. However, critical details surrounding Till's brutal murder and its aftermath have been unavailable until recently.

In **The Blood of Emmett Till** (Simon and Schuster, 305p), the historian Timothy Tyson offers an invaluable re-examination of the infamous lynching and its impact on the modern civil rights movement. He does this, in part, by drawing on new evidence, including the once-lost transcript from the Till murder trial and the only interview given by Carolyn Bryant, the white woman in whose name Till was killed and who spoke with Tyson in 2007. Although Till was not the first or last black child to be killed by white supremacists, his mother's courageous insistence on an open-casket funeral in Chicago and the subsequent acquittal of his killers—who later confessed to the murder—radicalized a generation of African-Americans fighting for democracy and equal rights.

As Tyson successfully demonstrates, however, critical pieces of the Till story were sometimes carefully constructed misrepresentations of more complicated truths. Regarding Carolyn Bryant's court testimony, it was willful perjury and a gross exaggeration of the initial account she gave about her brief interaction with Till in her family's grocery store. Indeed, when Bryant's husband and brother-in-law forcefully entered the home of Till's relatives in East Money in the early hours of Sunday, Aug. 28, 1955, they asked for the boy from Chicago "who did the smart talking up at Money." But when 21-year-old Bryant testified under oath in court less than a month later, she said that Till had not only verbally insulted her but also grabbed her around the waist and attempted to rape her.

In this masterful retelling of the Till saga, readers will appreciate Tyson's inclusion of the backstories of the case's major players and the segregated communities that produced them. Of the baseball-loving boy affectionately called Bobo, Tyson reminds us that Till would not have been completely unaware of the dangers of Jim Crow apartheid before taking the train down to Mississippi to visit his maternal relatives that fateful summer. Indeed, the black Chicago community that mounted a global campaign to secure justice for Till's family had endured de-

AP Photo/Chicago Sun-Times, File

Emmett Till's mother, Mamie Mobley, chose an open-coffin wake for her son. The boy's lynchers never wanted his body to be seen.

cades of white supremacist terror and de facto segregation in the North. In Till's grand-uncle Mose Wright, readers will not discover some long-suffering old man broken down by Jim Crow, as some accounts have suggested. Nor was Wright's court testimony against Bryant's husband and brother-in-law his first act of courage. In fact, Wright was a well-respected minister and sharecropper, who slept in his car armed with a rifle leading up to the murder trial to protect himself from repeated white threats against his life.

Far from being an isolated act of domestic terrorism in the Jim Crow South, Till's lynching, as Tyson meticulously illustrates, was part and parcel of a well-organized campaign of white resistance to the U.S. Supreme Court's historic desegregation ruling in Brown v. Board of Education (1954). Massive resistance, as it came to be called, unleashed an especially violent wave of social, political and economic terror on black Southerners. This movement gave the green light to Till's lynchers and then permitted 12 white male jurors to exonerate them in the explicit name of white supremacy.

Although *The Blood of Emmett Till* does not include the gut-wrenching image of Till's body, Tyson's description of Till's hours-long beating and mutilation and his repeated screams for mercy and for his mother, which woke several African-American witnesses, will shake 21st-century readers to their core. So, too, will Tyson's recounting of the discovery of Till's naked body in the Tallahatchie River three days after his kidnapping and the multiple attempts made by white authorities to bury Till's body (and the truth it told) in Mississippi without his mother's permission. That Till's lynchers and their powerful supporters never wanted his body to be seen demonstrates that they understood clearly what it revealed about their own inhumanity and the violent illegitimacy of white supremacy.

In addition to paying special attention to the backstories of Till's mother, Mamie Till Bradley and Carolyn Bryant, *The Blood of Emmett Till* must be applauded for illuminating a host of other women who have long stood in the shadows of the Till case. They include Eula Lee Morgan, the alcoholic and pistol-toting mother who nurtured Till's lynchers in an overtly racist and violent family. There is also the deeply religious Alma Carthan, who, like her daughter Mamie, "made the Earth tremble" in black Chicago upon receiving news of her grandson's kidnapping in her native Mississippi.

Tyson also showcases the lesser-known, but equally courageous, actions of Elizabeth Wright, Mose Wright's wife. Indeed, it was Till's grand-aunt who rushed to try to wake Till and usher him into the darkness of the cotton fields before his armed killers forcefully entered her home. Knowing what only black women can know, Elizabeth was also the first person to fear the worst. In addition to offering Till's murderers money to spare him from their wrath, Wright immediately sought help for her grand-nephew following his kidnapping.

While this book succeeds in highlighting the agency of black women in Till's defense, it hesitates to interrogate and indict fully the agency and violence of Carolyn Bryant (and Southern white womanhood more broadly) in Till's death and the subsequent acquittal of his killers. This reluctance is telling considering Bryant's admitted perjury and the disingenuous parts of her 2007 interview, which Tyson notes. Bryant's selective amnesia about details that would further implicate her in Till's kidnapping is also glaring and casts serious shadows over the sincerity of her motives in 2007. Nevertheless, *The Blood of Emmett Till* once and for all confirms what most African-Americans have always known about Bryant's brief encounter with Till and what the elderly Bryant finally confessed: "Nothing that boy did could ever justify what happened to him."

Despite some other missed opportunities, including Tyson's failure to explore fully the role of religion in massive white resistance, *The Blood of Emmett Till* is a timely and necessary book. One cannot begin to understand the current deterioration of American race relations without confronting the enduring realities of white supremacy present in the Till case. These include the relentless criminalization of black and brown communities, the rapid resegregation of the nation's public schools, and the enthusiastic support that most white Christians and white women have given to Donald J. Trump's presidency.

It will be essential, however, to remember that America is not simply "still killing Emmett Till," as Tyson proclaims in his epilogue. It is also still exonerating Till's lynchers, giving enormous platforms to their lying spouses, absolving the segregated communities that produce them, and steadfastly ignoring the pleas of black mothers like Mamie Till Bradley and the black communities behind them still warring for the soul of America.

Shannen Dee Williams ***is an assistant professor of history at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.***

The spirit of Israel

Yitzhak Rabin's life is fundamentally the story of Israel in the 20th century. Born in 1922 in Jerusalem, Rabin studied agriculture in a kibbutz east of Tel Aviv, enlisted in the Palmach (the pre-national military units formed to confront possible Nazi attacks) and fought alongside the British in Syria and Lebanon against troops loyal to Vichy France. He demonstrated his military leadership skills during key operations of the 1947-48 War of Independence and concluded the war as a lieutenant colonel in the supreme high command.

From 1968 to 1973, he effectively represented Israel to the United States, polishing his diplomatic skills. Soon after his return home, he defeated his archrival Shimon Peres as Labor Party leader and led his party to parliamentary victory. His first tenure (1974-77) as Israel's fifth prime minister was marked by highs and lows. In May 1977, political scandals, coupled with the nation's fatigue over 29 years of Labor hegemony, led to his unseating. In October 1992, Labor again won the election and Rabin returned to power as prime minister. His years of experience in politics enabled him now to view the Israeli-Palestinian situation differently.

It is at this point that this biography's author, Itamar Rabinovich, the former Israeli ambassador to the United States and chief negotiator with Syria from 1992 to 1996, became closely associated with Rabin and his government. According to Rabinovich, Rabin oversaw the complex negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organization that resulted in the Oslo Accords (1993). Other agreements followed. In December 1994, Rabin, Peres and Arafat shared the Nobel Peace Prize.

By Nov. 4, 1995, the enmity caused by the agreements had reached its apex when Yigal Amir, a 24-year-old law student, fired three bullets into Rabin's back, killing him. In the 1970s, Rabin had denounced the ideology and violence of extreme groups, including the right-wing Gush Emunim, as a threat to Israeli democracy; but at the time, he feared entities like the P.L.O. even more. In the end, the enemy came from within.

Rabinovich has produced an immensely engaging study of Yitzhak Rabin. The intricate weaving of complex diplomatic and political history is extremely well done.

Kevin P. Spicer, C.S.C., *is the James J. Kenneally Distinguished Professor of History at Stonehill College.*

Inside the Cenacle

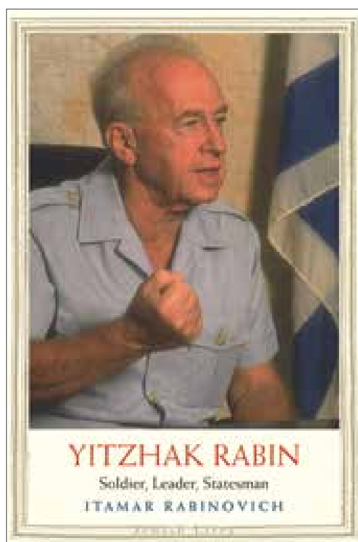
If these walls could talk! Monsignor Vaghi begins this contemplative book by locating the reader within the Cenacle. (Vaghi is a church pastor; in 1995 he was designated a prelate of honor by St. John Paul II.)

The Cenacle room was the scene of the Last Supper, as well as of the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus to the disciples and their gathering on the feast of Pentecost. As if drawing a "composition of place" from the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola, Vaghi locates the readers with a vivid description so that they may "see" the space and imagine these events unfolding. From this vantage point he encourages the readers to find their own Cenacle, a personal place for contemplation. The book would make for a good companion on retreat.

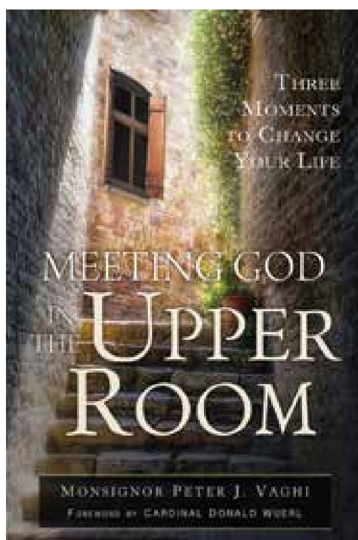
Vaghi structures the book around these three events. A good amount of time is devoted to discussing the Last Supper, focusing on Jesus washing the feet of the disciples. He calls this action a "shocking gesture" and delves into detail uncovering the shock of it all. In this way the stories of Scripture and the prayers of the liturgy, so familiar, are given fresh meaning. Here also, much is said about "mercy," rekindling the fire of the Jubilee Year of Mercy. Half the book focuses on the Last Supper, and it is time well spent. But in moving on to the next two parts, the reader many find these rather brief, in comparison, and may want to hear more. It is a compliment to the beginning narrative.

Besides being a contemplation, the book is also a conversation. Vaghi engages a variety of voices from the church's tradition, including recent papal decrees, the Second Vatican Council and St. Augustine. The subtitle of the book suggests a life-changing experience. The book is a call to conversion—a "turning around"—and the reader may find a deeper and richer understanding of his or her own life by spending time with this book.

Thomas J. Scirghi, S.J., *is an associate professor of sacramental theology at Fordham University in New York.*



Yitzhak Rabin
Soldier, Leader, Statesman
By Itamar Rabinovich
Yale University Press. 304p $25



Meeting God in the Upper Room
Three Moments
To Change Your Life
By Msgr. Peter J. Vaghi
Franciscan Media. 144p $15

The problem of violence in the modern world

In nearly every class I teach on Rwanda, I receive a seemingly simple question from a puzzled student: "Who are the Hutu and Tutsi?" Inevitably I pause, breathe deeply and slowly reply, "That's a more complicated question than you know."

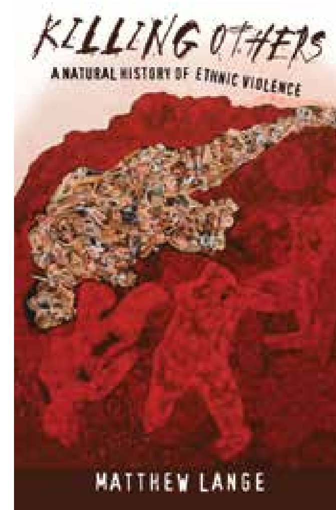
It is with great eagerness, then, that I dove into Matthew Lange's new book, hoping he could lend some sociological insight to this perennial student question. In this regard, Lange's book did not disappoint. In just over 200 pages, *Killing Others* provides an erudite yet accessible introduction to the origins and causes of ethnic identity and ethnic violence in the modern world.

Far from dismissing ethnic violence as a lingering relic of premodern atavism, Lange argues that modernity and ethnic violence are intrinsically linked. Lange defines ethnicity as a subnational "communal identity" and "collective consciousness" based on an imagined common culture and shared descent. In turn, the move from ethnic consciousness to ethnic violence depends on having a sense of "ethnic obligation" to one's own in-group as well as "emotional prejudice" (for example, hate, anger, jealousy, fear and envy) against the out-group.

Key dimensions of modernity—especially powerful bureaucracies, communication technologies and mass transport, education and media—made it easier to both propagate ethnic consciousness and mobilize and direct ethnic violence. In turn, ethnicity became entwined with modern notions of nationality, especially in "ethnicized nation-states," including the Nazis' "German *Volk*," Slobodan Milosevic's "Greater Serbia" or Rwanda's "Hutu Republic." One shudders at the resonance with contemporary ethno-nationalist resurgences in the United States, Europe, India, China and elsewhere.

Ultimately, Lange argues that the keys to reducing ethnic violence are also contained in modernity: namely "robust rights-based democracy, effective states and widespread economic prosperity." Overall, Lange's book is an excellent introductory undergraduate text that helps clarify the often-muddled roots of ethnicity and ethnic violence. I'll be using it with some of my own puzzled Creighton undergrads next year.

J. J. Carney *is an assistant professor of theology and the director of African studies at Creighton University.*



Killing Others
A Natural History of Ethnic Violence
By Matthew Lange
Cornell University Press. 239p $25

Bill Nye can't save the world with science alone

Bill Nye always made me laugh as a kid. He stoked the fires of my curiosity and spurred me to a lifelong love of science. When I taught high school biology, most weeks included some Bill Nye clips in my classroom. I used to laugh along with my students. We would all chant "Bill, Bill," as the theme song started. But something has changed—after I binged on his new Netflix series, Bill Nye seemed a little less like the science guy and more like the condescending guy.

Mr. Nye says that he is back to save the world—with science! His new show is corny and his gags are every bit as goofy as they were in the '90s. Mr. Nye is not wrong about the science involved in the political and social issues he is tackling. But too often his humor and wit seem meant to prove that people who disagree with him just need to understand the science more clearly.

Consider this telling moment from Episode 5. While trying to explain the origins of life, Mr. Nye finds a replica of Noah's Ark mixed in with all the other props that he is using to make his point. Then without any reflection, he whisks it off the table and says: "There's no freaking Noah's Ark. I'm sorry, people; it did not happen."

Well, yeah Bill, there is plenty of scientific evidence that the flood did not happen as it is written in Genesis. Creationism should annoy us as much as scientism. But Mr. Nye's fleeting moment with Noah's Ark points to the core of the problem with his new show. He doesn't allow his normally insatiable imagination to consider that Noah's Ark—or the religious point of view more broadly—have any place in a discussion about saving the world. He will not let his imagination (or his audience) explore the possibilities because that ark has been, figuratively and literally, shoved under the table.

Too many leaders in the scientific community—and Bill Nye surely now is one of them—are dismissive of other domains of knowledge. While science has done, and will continue to do great things for us all, it is folly to act as though it were the only realm of knowledge worthy of time and attention, or as though the scientific method were the only method with any power to unite us and employ our creative energies to save the world.

We make decisions for a wide range of reasons, and when people make conclusions contrary to good science, hitting them over the head with more and more scientific explanations is not going to move the needle. We need to understand why people reject good science. Condescension and snarky dismissal are not going to change hearts.

When I was young, Mr. Nye touched my heart and got me excited about how science works. But changing the hearts of adults—whether climate change deniers or creationists—

In his new series on Netflix, Bill Nye is a little less like the science guy and more like the condescending guy.

Photo: Netflix/Eddy Chen

is going to require more than getting a 13-year-old to fall in love with lab work. If we are going to get anywhere on the important issues Mr. Nye is raising, we cannot ignore sociology, philosophy and, yes, the wisdom to be found in religious traditions.

There is still hope. Recently, Mr. Nye, famously dismissive of philosophy, told Olivia Goldhill of The Atlantic that her article and the avalanche of criticism against his philosophical ignorance lead him to explore epistemology. With this recent development, perhaps Season 2 will feature the Science Guy stripped of his condescension and humbled, I hope, by an appreciation for other important realms of knowledge.

Eric Sundrup, S.J., *associate editor. Twitter: @sunnydsj.*

What '13 Reasons Why' gets wrong about suicide

If it takes a village to raise a child then it takes one to kill a teenager, as well, or at least that is the premise of Netflix's provocative new series, "13 Reasons Why," based on Jay Asher's 2007 book of the same name. The show depicts the series of events that led to the suicide of high school student Hannah Baker (Katherine Langford). This is not TV viewing for the faint of heart or any other parts of the soul for that matter.

"13 Reasons" has created a storm of controversy and incited outrage from numerous sides, including members of the Catholic community who claim that the series romanticizes suicide and does nothing to show the role mental illness plays when a person takes his or her own life. Quang Tran, a Jesuit priest with a background in suicide prevention counselling, says that though the show "has good intentions...it could be triggering" for teenagers at risk. Father Tran also finds the show's use of Hannah's posthumous narration as not giving adolescent viewers the proper perspective on the finality of suicide. "The permanence of death must be emphasized for children who developmentally do not understand death," Father Tran says.

"13 Reasons" should not be consumed mindlessly; it is an indictment of contemporary society and the values we hold. The primary problem with the show is in its solution. "13 Reasons" does an excellent job of showing how the community failed, not just Hannah, but several of her peers. But it attempts to make a very cut and dried case out of a situation that can never be cut and dried, and in doing so, takes away all culpability from the one person who could have prevented it from happening. Ultimately, the answers that "13 Reasons" provides are not answers at all and leave the audience with nothing but confusion and despair.

Jake Martin, S.J., *is a special contributor to* ***America.***

"Thirteen Reasons" has created a storm of controversy.

Photo: Netflix/Beth Dubber

From Ashes to Fire

Readings: Acts 2:1-11, Ps 104, 1 Cor 12:3-13, Jn 20:19-23

Pentecost started as a Jewish feast. Forty-nine days after the crossing of the Red Sea, the Israelites arrived at Sinai. On the fiftieth day, God appeared on the mountain in the midst of fire and glory and offered a covenant to Israel. Jews continue to commemorate this event today on the feast of *Shavu'ot*, "Weeks." Greek-speaking Jews called the feast *hē pentēkostēs hēméra*, "the Fiftieth Day." It is by this name that the celebration came into the Christian tradition.

The Jewish and Christian feasts both celebrate God's action in human history. Christians focus on the risen Christ still present in the church through the power of the Spirit. Christ's resurrection and ascension revealed new dimensions to Christ's mission, but they did not change its character. He remained at work in unseen ways, continuing to guide his disciples. The only substantial difference was that his animating Spirit now became available to anyone who took up his mission.

When we join Christ, God's work in human history becomes ours as well. In the second reading, Paul says, "To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit." Christ's Spirit sends us out to places Jesus was not able to reach during his brief public ministry. To accomplish his mission through us, he provides whatever gifts we need to bring it to completion. God continues to act in human history through the labors of Christians throughout the world.

Our most important task is to reveal God at work. Perhaps we become teachers of the faith; perhaps we make it our mission to point out moments of grace that others miss. Such efforts continue the original work of the apostles, who spoke "in their own tongues of the mighty acts of God."

We also join God at work. God accomplishes most things without our help. Nonetheless, as our second reading shows, Christ provides us spiritual gifts so we can cooperate in God's labor. When we provide our hands or voice or heart at the right place and time, we give God new opportunities to transform human history.

A word needs to be said about the Gospel's unsettling talk of "retaining sins." John might have intended nothing more than to symbolize the trust Christ put in his apostles. Augustine emphasized the medicinal value of this teaching: the "retention" of sins leads to repentance. While we may never find a fully satisfying way to understand this saying, it might be helpful to remember that discipleship comes at a cost. Christ allowed the apostles to turn away anyone who did not take his mission seriously. They "retained" their sins until they had the maturity to follow Christ.

The psalmist sings, "If you take away their breath, they perish and return to the dust. When you send forth your spirit they are created and you renew the face of the earth." During Lent, we let our egos return to the dust; at Easter, God raises us up from the dust. Today, God calls us to transform the earth. We rise each day a new creation in the Spirit, sent forth to set the world on fire.

When you send forth your spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth. (Ps 104:30)

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

What gifts has Christ given us for mission?

How have you revealed God's work?

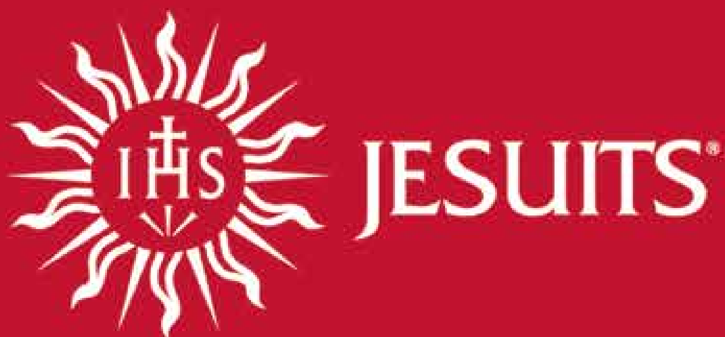
How have you assisted God's work?

Michael Simone, S.J., *is an assistant professor of Scripture at Boston College School of Theology and Ministry.*

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

CATHOLIC INITIATIVES

How are you being called to serve?



Jesuit Conference
1016 16th Street, NW, #400
Washington, DC 20036

202.462.0400
www.Jesuits.org

Formed in Their Likeness

Readings: Ex 34:4-9, Dn 3:52-56, 2 Cor 13:11-13, Jn 3:16-18

The New Testament calls God a trinity. In today's second reading, for example, Paul bids the Corinthians farewell with the blessing of God, Jesus and the Spirit. Matthew's Gospel is even more explicit. Jesus sends the disciples out to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." This line appears in every ancient version of the text and in early texts like the Didache. Another example appears in 1 Pt 1:1-2, which contains an explicitly trinitarian theology of salvation. Although the specifics took centuries, the trinitarian nature of God was clear to many early Christians.

The Father was the transcendent creator, the awe-inspiring being, so great that even the hem of his garment filled the Temple in Isaiah's vision (6:1). It was he who led Israel from slavery to freedom and he who restored Israel repeatedly when they rebelled. The Father was the "Almighty," ruler of heaven and earth, *Adonai* in the Hebrew Scriptures and *kyrios* among Jews who spoke Greek.

The Son was Jesus Christ, the obedient servant, glorified and seated at the Father's right hand. He would return at some future time to judge the living and dead. Within a generation of Jesus' death and resurrection, the first Christians called the Son *kyrios* as well, seeing in him the "one like a son of man" of Dn 7:14 who shared the Father's attributes.

The Spirit was the Father's essence, literally, his "life-breath." It was this "life-breath" that spoke to Moses, raised Jesus from the dead and was now available to anyone who received baptism. This "life-breath" is the "eternal life" of today's Gospel: "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life." To be baptized into the Spirit was to be plunged into the fire of Sinai and the passion of Christ.

That humanity had encountered God in these three ways was obvious to early Christians. The question that took centuries to sort out was, "Is God like really like this, or is it the weakness of the human mind that makes God seem this way?" Over time, Christians came to recognize that God really was a trinity. To paraphrase Athanasius of Alexandria, the Father is a spring, the Son is the water and the Spirit is the drink we take. Each plays a role in every divine action.

What might get lost in this elegant theology is that the Trinity does not act merely for God's own glory but to form a people. The cosmic creator finished work with the first man and woman. The Almighty called Moses in order to establish Israel. The Father rescued his Son from death and gave birth to a church through the gift of the Spirit.

All creation extends from a trinitarian community. For Christians, this is the true nature of reality. There is no solitary god and no friendless human. The love that the Trinity shares within itself is the rightful inheritance of every person. If today's feast teaches any lesson, it is that estrangement is a sacrilege and alienation a blasphemy. Christ draws his disciples into the Father's love only to send them forth in the Spirit to seek out the lost and call them home.

'If I find favor with you, O Lord, do come along in our company.' (Ex 34:9)

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

How have you encountered God as Trinity?

How have you invited others to share in God's community?

Michael Simone, S.J., *is an assistant professor of Scripture at Boston College School of Theology and Ministry.*

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

CATHOLIC INITIATIVES

Catholic School Board Conference 2017

Helping Boards Act Responsibly and Ethically

Led by national Catholic school board experts:
Dr. Regina Haney, Dr. Dan Ryan, Dr. Tony Sabatino,
Dr. Angie Shaughnessy, SCN, Keynote Speaker

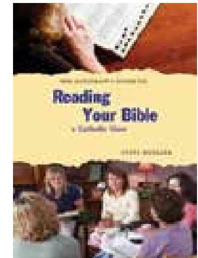
June 23 – June 25

Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA

For more information, visit soe.lmu.edu/CSBC17
Contact the Center for Catholic Education 310.338.7303

Loyola Marymount University

BOOKS



THE CATECHIST'S GUIDE TO Reading the Bible Series by Steve Mueller. Ideal for independent study, reading groups, ministry and adult formation. Published by www.faithAlivebooks.com

PILGRIMAGE

HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE [November 16-26, 2017] Bethlehem + conversation with Palestinian Catholic Mayor; Jericho, Tabor, Capernaum, Cana, Nazareth, 3-days in kibbutz hotel on shore of Sea of Galilee, Joppa, Jerusalem, Qumran, Masada, Dead Sea, conversation with Patriarch, and more. Brochure & Contacts: Jesuits Michael Cooper [727-644-5544] & Paul Macke [224-279-7786], & Sister Caroline Cerveny [727-744-4684 or c.cerveny@verizon.net].

WANT YOUR AD HERE?

Visit americamedia.org. | E-mail: karko@ americamagazine.org
Call 212-515-0126.

The Best of Both Worlds

Studying **HEALTH CARE MISSION LEADERSHIP** and **BIOETHICS**

- *MA in Health Care Mission Leadership*
- *MA in Bioethics & Health Policy*

The **INSTITUTE of PASTORAL STUDIES** and the **NEISWANGER INSTITUTE for BIOETHICS** collaborate to offer you the knowledge and skills to deepen the theological dimension of your work and to address ethical challenges in the clinic and board room.

THERESE LYSAUGHT, PhD | MICHAEL McCARTHY, PhD | MICHAEL CANARIS, PhD | JOHN HARDT, PhD | MARK KUCZEWSKI, PhD | KATHERINE WASSON, PhD, MPH

Learn more about our collaborative degree opportunities at:
LUC.edu/csjrequest

The Strength of a Nation

Why Trump's budget is a threat to our national security

By Leon E. Panetta

What makes America great? For many, the preamble to our Constitution demonstrates our nation's strengths: "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Prosperity, do ordain and establish this Constitution."

These values, supported by our elected leadership, our national defense and our diplomacy, are what constitute the national security of our nation.

In 2017, all of this is being tested by a dangerous and unpredictable world and partisan politics that is more consumed with protecting power than protecting our values. We are facing crises in countries such as Syria and North Korea, as well as issues from terrorism to nuclear proliferation.

Historically, the United States has not hesitated. We have exercised strong world leadership by working with our allies, built new partnerships and strengthened both our military and diplomatic capabilities to defend vital national interests.

But times have changed. The American people have endured over 16 years of war and a deep recession. As President Donald J. Trump is discovering, the world is complicated, and it is our security that will be threatened if we ignore the critical issues in the world.

Mr. Trump's proposed budget shows that he still does not fully understand what makes America strong. His budget increases defense spending by $54 billion while drastically cutting programs that serve the most vulnerable in our society, like Meals on Wheels and health research. He is also proposing a 29 percent cut in State Department funding for development and diplomacy, peace-building and conflict prevention. Mr. Trump's budget provides a boost to "our common defense" at the price of cutting support for "the general welfare." Our strength depends on both.

While it is not likely that Congress will support the Trump budget, it is also unlikely that the president and Congress will work together to resolve any of the serious issues facing the nation.

The continuing political dysfunction in Washington is the greatest threat to our national security. We cannot have a nation that meets our responsibility to defend our security and promote the general welfare without a president and Congress willing to work together to govern our democracy.

We have a record national debt of $20 trillion, and the Congressional Budget Office projects that if nothing is done, the debt will double from 77 percent of our gross domestic product to 150 percent in three decades. We need a comprehensive budget agreement that effectively reduces the debt over the next five to 10 years. To do that requires a defense budget that invests in cutting-edge technologies but also finds savings in procurement, compensation and efficiencies; a nondefense budget that funds priorities like foreign aid, infrastructure and critical safety net programs but also eliminates duplicative regulations and bureaucracy; and a budget that controls costs on entitlement programs and provides new revenues as part of tax reform. During the 1980s and 1990s, I participated in bipartisan comprehensive budget agreements that did exactly that. The result was a balanced budget, a growing economy and a secure America.

Throughout our history, we have found the leadership willing to take the risks necessary to deal with crises like world wars and recessions. The real strength of America lies not just in Washington but in the spirit, resilience, courage and common sense of the American people. I have seen these values in the men and women in uniform who serve this nation and are willing to fight and die for their country.

If there are brave warriors willing to give their lives for our country, the elected leadership should be able to embrace a little of that same courage in order to govern the nation and protect all of the values that make America strong.

Leon E. Panetta *is a former director of the C.I.A. and former secretary of defense.*

America (ISSN : 0002-7049) Copyright © 2017 by America Press, Inc., is published on Jan. 2, then biweekly beginning Jan. 23, with two special issues on April 24 and Oct. 23 by America Press, Inc., 33 West 60th St. 6th Floor, New York, NY 10023. Business and Editorial Offices: 33 West 60th St., 6th Floor New York, NY 10023, Accounting and Circulation Offices: America Press Inc., 33 West 60th St., 6th Floor New York, NY 10023. Call 1 (800) 627-9533 to subscribe. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY. Send address changes to: America, P.O. Box 293159, Kettering, OH 45429 POSTMASTER: Send address changes to America, P.O. Box 293159, Kettering, OH 45429.

JESUIT LEGACY SOCIETY

*For more than a century the Jesuits at **America** have invested in you.*

WAYS TO GIVE

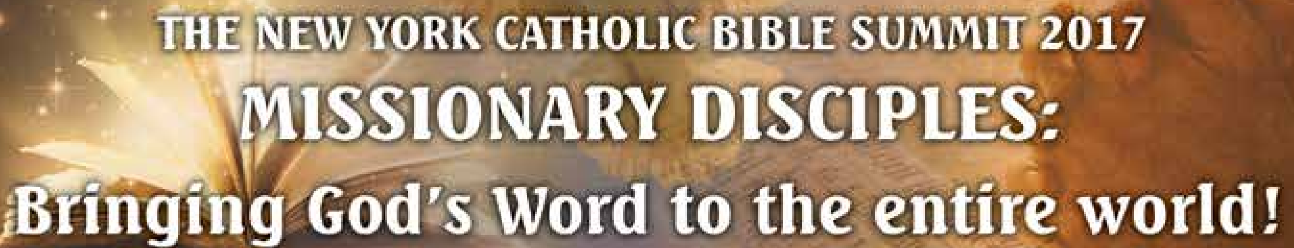
Help **America** to continue its mission to lead the conversation about faith and culture for years to come. Consider remembering **America** in your estate plan.

Your membership in the Jesuit Legacy Society involves no annual dues or obligations.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Inscription of your name in our Jesuit Legacy Society Registry, maintained in a place of honor in **America**'s Saint Edmund Campion, S.J., chapel.
- Mass of Thanksgiving for the intentions of Jesuit Legacy Society members
- Jesuit Legacy Society Certificate of Membership signed by our president & editor in chief, Rev. Matthew F. Malone, S.J.
- New-member recognition in **America**'s publications and other platforms (only with your permission).
- A complimentary one-year print and digital subscription for a friend or colleague
- Invitations to special events and seminars

For more information contact Nicholas D. Sawicki at 212-515-0105 or sawicki@americamedia.org.
Please note when writing your will that our legal title and address are:
America Press, Inc., 33 West 60th St., 6th Fl., New York, NY 10019-3803 • (212) 581-4640



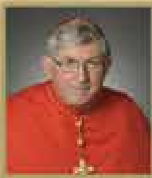
Saturday, June 17, 2017
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

New York Catholic Center
350 East 56th Street, New York City

SPONSORED BY
Archdiocesan Catechetical Office and American Bible Society

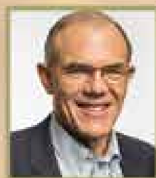
Archbishop Christophe Louis Pierre
Papal Nuncio to the United States
Principal Celebrant and Homilist, Opening Mass
Nuncio Apostólico en los Estados Unidos
Celebrante Principal y Predicador de la Misa de Apertura

Dr. Roy L. Peterson
President, American Bible Society
Morning Address



Thomas Cardinal Collins
Archbishop of Toronto, Canada
English Keynote Speaker

Carlos Cardenal Osoro Sierra
Arzobispo de Madrid, España
Orador Principal en español



MUSEUM OF THE BIBLE
Special exhibit preview of
Museum of the Bible opening Fall 2017.

Mr. Cary Summers, *President, Museum of the Bible*

Handing On the Faith with Excellence
WWW.NYFAITHFORMATION.ORG

Register online at
www.nyfaithformation.org